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BRITANNIA:

A

National Epic Poem,

IN

TWENTY BOOKS.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A CRITICAL DISSERTATION

ON

EPIC MACHINERY.

46889

Progeniem sed enim, TROJANO a Sanguine, duci
Audierat.

Hinc Populum LATE REGEM, BELLOQUE SUPERBUM.

VIRG.

BY

JOHN OGILVIE, *D. D. F. R. S. EDIN.*

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1801.

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

GEORGE JOHN, EARL AND VISCOUNT SPENCER,

VISCOUNT ALTHORP, AND BARON SPENCER OF ALTHORP,

IN THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON,

ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S MOST HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL,

AND

KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER.

MY LORD,

WHEN I had finished the work, of which I have now the honour to address Your Lordship as the Patron, I was induced to offer it to *Your* acceptance, in consequence of what I had learnt in this remote part of the Island, concerning your classical erudition, and political ability. It is no doubt principally in the character of an elegant and accomplished Scholar, that the author of BRITANNIA considers Your Lordship on the present occassion. Yet the reader will observe,

observe, that the atchievements recorded in it bear an immediate relation to that sphere of action in which you have enjoyed the sublime satisfaction of being a benefactor to your country. Your Name, as President of the Board of ADMIRALTY, will suggest, to the most remote posterity, ideas of unexampled naval victories; of which, by having prepared the means, you will be judged to participate the renown. I do not indeed exaggerate in affirming, that the period of Your Lordship's Presidency in the British Admiralty, will form, in the page of future history, the most auspicious era in the annals of the first and most conspicuous of the Nations of Europe.

IN busy scenes of public occupation, literary pursuits are sometimes overlooked, as exuberant, and sometimes rejected as incongruous: and at the levees of the great and the opulent, the Muses are seldom of the party. That comprehension, or grasp of thought, whereby the mind accommodates itself with equal ease to the research of Science, the elegance of Art, and the knowledge of Mankind, is the result of a combination of powers, that rarely meet in the same individual.—Yet, it is under the patronage of the illustrious few, who are thus distinguished from others, by discernment, as well as taste and sensibility, that the finer Arts may be said to find a soil, by whose genial influence their blossoms open, and their fruit expands into maturity. To You,

My Lord,

DEDICATION.

My Lord, as a member of this community, to whose mind the acquisitions of knowledge are not less a familiar, than the elegant Arts are a congenial entertainment; I feel peculiar pleasure in inscribing a *Poem*, of which the subject (the first settlement of a great nation) is not unworthy your regard.—And while, as a citizen, I participate of the general concern, on the change that has taken place in your public situation; yet, as an author, I reflect, with satisfaction, that it will be favourable to the indulgence of "learned ease," and literary entertainment. The enjoyment of "*otium cum dignitate*," generally *succeeds* the possession of power, to which in its highest perfection it is seldom antecedent. It is the reward of public virtue, exerted, in the view, and for the benefit of Nations. You, My Lord, if you should withdraw, upon the present occasion, wholly into the sequestered walk of private life, will have pleasure in knowing that you are followed by the plaudits of your country. I cannot indeed have an idea of an higher gratification, than Your Lordship muſt receive, when you hear the voice of discordant and hoſtile factions harmonizing, with singular unanimity, in applauding the conduct, and in regretting the retirement, of EARL SPENCER.

In the pursuit of those delightful studies, wherein youth will find a guide to its inexperience, and age, a cordial in its decline; when you turn your attention to the subject

ject of the Epopœa, you will find that it includes within its comprehensive range, as much the events of historical detail, as the luminous colour of poetic embellishment. If the present work should fail therefore in conveying information to a mind so improved as that of Your Lordship, I shall be happy in thinking, that, at an hour of release from more important occupation, it may find admittance as an amusement.

I have the honour to be, with the greateſt consideration,

MY LORD,

YOUR LORDSHIP's

MOST OBLIGED,

MOST OBEDIENT,

AND MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

JOHN OGILVIE.

Midmar,
May 1801.

"spirit is not master of himself while he reads him." Thus far I have considered Epic Machinery, as a source of variety, and of entertainment. Its advantages in these points of view will be examined more particularly, and will be placed in a stronger light, when the objections shall be canvassed to which critical investigation has given rise.

2.—FROM the variety and entertainment which Machinery gives to the Epic Fable, I am naturally led to make some remarks on the dignity and animation which, by it's operation, are imparted to the human characters, thus exhibited to the highest possible advantage.

ATTENDED by a celestial Guardian, or by a protecting Divinity, a Hero rises, no doubt, in the estimation of those by whom he is considered in this high character; and he feels that confidence in himself which arises from a sense of Divine Favour. It has indeed been said, not altogether without appearance of reason, that, when Heroes are thus supported, we cannot judge properly of their natural prowess; and that the Machinery thus becomes prejudicial, instead of being favourable to the ultimate purpose of the Poet, whose combatants are unequally paired, not in consequence of superior power or fortitude, on either side, but by the partial favour or disapprobation of Beings by whom their destiny is determined. The Heroes of Epic Poetry have therefore been said rather to be dishonoured than dignified by the influence and presence of Divinities, who prescribe their course, impress their hearts, or controul their actions. Thus Ajax retiring from Hector, is depressed by Jupiter;* and the Trojan Champion in his turn complains in the last scene of his life, of being deserted by Apollo:† Achilles ascribes to Minerva the victory which he was confident that he would obtain over him:‡ and the language of Turnus is to the same purpose,

Dii me terrent, et Jupiter hostis,§ &c.

BOSSU,

* Ζευς δε Πατηρ Αιανθ' υψιζυγος εν φοβον ωρσε
Στη δε ταφων, &c. Iliad. Λ.

† ——η γαρ ρα τωλαι
Ζηνι τε και Διος υιει Εκεβολω, οι με τωρος γε
Προφρανες ερυκται· νυν δ'αυτε με Μοιρα κιχανει, &c. Iliad. Χ.

‡ ——κηρ δε σε Παλλας Αθηνη
Εγχει εμω δαμαα. Ibid.

§ Æneid. Lib. 12.

Bossu, in his Treatise on an Epic Poem, appropriates a section to the examination of the Question, "Whether the presence of a God dishonours a Hero?"‖— He treats the subject philosophically. "Men," he says, "are apt to apply to the conduct of God respecting mankind, the same standard whereby they estimate that of each other. But nothing can be more wide of the purpose. It is indeed true, that our good purposes, our courage, our virtues of whatever kind, were the gift of God: but in order to maintain his favour, we must exercise them by all kinds of efforts. And a Hero ought to fight as if he expected to succeed without divine assistance; as if, according to a proverbial expression of the Ancients, "the Gods cannot be properly said to give us the benefits which we receive from them. They only sell these at the price of our labour. Here then," says this Writer, "lies the radical difference between the assistance of a God, and that of men.— The actions of men are the sole property of the individuals by whom they are performed. Their glory is diminished by human participation, but by divine assistance it is augmented: and Achilles, who when he was pursuing Hector, forbade any Greek to lift a spear against him; yet, far from refusing the aid of Minerva, gloried in having obtained it, and announced this circumstance in triumph to Hector himself."*

This is the summary of our Author's reasoning, which is that of a Philosopher, and of a good man. If, however, the reader should think, that it may not in all cases admit of particular application, he will find an answer to this objection, in the principles that were laid down in a former part of this Essay, and will be more particularly explained in the course of it. He has seen already, that in poetry all objects are animated, and that attention is kept awake by a continued succession of scenes passing before the mind, on which the Actors converse in language that is perfectly intelligible, when we enter into their characters, and sources of information. We must always distinguish, when we read the great standards of the Epopoea, between the language of a *Poet*, and the plain detail of a Historian, or Biographer.

‖ Traité du Poeme Epique:—A Treatise, in which, although not perhaps written with all the vivacity of his Countrymen, the reader will find, in the Author's opinion, many excellent sentiments, and much good sense.

* Liv. 5. Chapit. vi.

pher. When we examine the Iliad with a philosophical eye, we see all the physical phenomena of Nature, as well as all the moral perfections which we ascribe to the First Cause; represented, not simply by their effects or operations, but by Beings who were believed to preside over the former, or in whom the latter were judged to be inherent and predominant qualities. When a Historian therefore would say, that Ajax turned his back, and retired from Hector, moved by an impulse of fear at his approach; Homer tells you, that this happened by the partiality of Jupiter at that time; who "struck terrour into his heart." When Hector in the same manner, complains in the last scene of his life, that Apollo had deserted him; we know that nothing more is understood by it, than that, having thrown his spear without effect, and being exposed, without a friend, to the assault of an enraged and superiour antagonist, he saw that his last hour was come, and that Destiny could no longer support him. And, in these, or in words of similar import, a Biographer or Historian would relate the fact.

But, to this philosophical account of the Homeric Fable, it is not necessary that a reader, and particularly that a reader of sensibility, should give so much attention, as to impair the effect of its Machinery. The Heroes of the Iliad are dignified as much in his estimation, as in their own judgment, by the Deities who attend upon, and protect them. They are impelled to perform actions that may evince them to be worthy of the divine favour: an interest arises from this concurrence of supernatural and of human agency, which neither would have created apart: and while these purposes are obtained, we have seen that the Divinities are Personifications if we may thus term it, of the various Phenomena of Nature, or of the moral qualities of Mind. Homer ought to be viewed in the two characters of a Poet, and a Philosopher. His story, in his poetical capacity, is enriched by incidents, enlivened by energy, and embellished by illustrations; his fable, as a Philosopher, is raised upon the immoveable basis of Truth and Nature. Thus, while he entertains in one character, he instructs in another.

> Quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
> Plenius et melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit.

3.—In order to complete our enlarged view of the nature, use, and effects of Epic Machinery; it remains only farther, that we should consider it in it's sphere of

of greatest and most comprehensive excellence, as the source of the Sublime and the Marvellous; or in other words, of whatever raises Admiration. But, it may be asked, is an exclusive privilege of producing the highest degree of this passion granted to *Epic* Poetry? and is it necessary to have Machinery for this purpose?—These are questions which may be asked with propriety. I ſhall have occasion, in answering them, to trace to their original, and to follow in their effects, the highest and most distinguishing characters of the Poetic Art.

To the first question, whether to excite the highest degree of Admiration, is the *peculiar* province of an Epic Poet, and whether this be not the natural tendency of other branches of the art? I reply, that to produce this great effect, is an ultimate object, of which the mind seldom loses sight in the Epopœa. In other species, various ends are proposed. In some, as in Pastoral, and in Moral or Ethical Poetry, Admiration, as a professed and general purpose, is inadmissible: in Lyric, it is fortuitous, and occasional: even in the Drama, Aristotle well observes, that admiration cannot be excited with the same power on the theatre, as it is in an Epic Poem; because an event may be related, that cannot pass in the view of an audience upon the stage:* for the verisimilitude that may be set aside in the former case, must be preserved in the latter. In the Epopœa alone therefore, a Poet may pass the limits within which all others are circumscribed, according to the same great Philosopher.† Let us investigate the cause of this licence.

Of the revolutions, and great events that are recorded in History, we distinguiſh the principal by the terms memorable, signal, wonderful, &c. And in the page of the Historian, the names of the Leaders are rendered immortal. Here you have a plain narration of facts, from which you form just ideas of momentous events, and general notions of eminent persons: and by bringing the whole into one point of view, you may estimate a character with truth and propriety. The various members of this summary pass in succession, like shadows along the wall. Some objects are marked, some are recollected by having made feeble impressions on Memory; and many are forgotten.

When we examine the nature of the Epic Fable, we find that it has as its foundation,

* De Art. Poet. C. 24. † Id. ibid.

dation, some historical narration of a real or supposed revolution, or mighty event, in which a whole people are involved as having general concern. But in proportion as the end of the Poet is to concentrate the various parts of a complicated detail, so as to make a vivid and lasting impression; his language and illustrations must be suited to his general purpose, and raised above the mediocrity of less elevated composition. Hence the terms important and memorable in the recital of an Historian, rise to singular, and immortal, in the work of a Poet.—*His* idea, in passing through the imagination, as a comet in its perihelion crossing the solar atmosphere, catches fire in its progress. His images are bold and animated; his colouring rich and exuberant; his Heroes excite admiration, and his diction rises to sublimity.

It appears therefore, that, when we consider the Epic action as great, and its field as a theatre of perilous enterprize and of heroic atchievement; whatever tends to raise admiration seems to grow out of the subject, as a native plant to which the soil is congenial.—Such is the base of two pillars that support the superb mansion of the Epic Queen; the Sublime, and the Marvellous.

Thus far we have investigated those great characteristics of the Epopœa, as rising out of the Fable, to which they bear a natural and inseparable relation.—Let us next enquire what is their influence and effect on the Epic Action.

A Poet, in this high province of the art, ought ever to keep in mind the dignity of his department. He ought at all times to consider himself as surrounded by great objects, of which his imagination rising from a lower to a superiour order, will at last be elevated to the sublime. We mistake, in judging that this excellence is obtained only, or even principally, by him who is able to conceive a great idea, and to clothe it in words that are adequate to its magnitude. There is a sublime of character, as well as of description; and of these it is much more difficult to reach the former, than to throw out the latter. When we contemplate with admiration an idea greatly conceived, or an illustration that rises to sublimity, the feeling is indeed delightful; but being suddenly excited, and unconnected with any other sensation, it passes over the mind, and is soon lost in the multiplicity of succeeding, and perhaps of similar beauties. But with the sublime of character the case is widely different. This species of the Grand in the Epopœa,

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demands something more than the splendour of poetic imagery, or the embellishment of appropriate example, to bring it to perfection. It is gradually wrought up by repeated efforts of the understanding, assisted by an invention that shows its excellence in every point of view. When the figure is completed, and has received the last heightenings of a delicate pencil, it becomes a Divine Object, whose influence is universal, and whose sublimity is heightened by circumstances which, in a character less conspicuous, might impair pre-eminence. Our examination of this subject will lead us to explain the connection of the Sublime with the Pathetic, and indeed with the passions in general. This theory will be most properly illustrated by example.

The character of Hector is wrought up by the Father of Epic Poetry, with all those qualities that excite estimation, and conciliate attachment. He is the great Defender of his country, the generous enemy, the intrepid Hero, the disinterested Patriot, the compassionate Friend. All that constitutes and consummates heroism, meet in this illustrious Commander; who is exalted by native superiority, and is followed by admiration. The tenderness of an Husband, and the fondness of a Father are placid and domestic virtues, which are repelled by the unbending ferocity of the Warrior, whose pride subsides at last, at their gentle voice, in murmurs of reluctant and of bashful acquiescence. But the sublime of character is exalted in Hector, by qualities that would depress that of an ordinary warrior. When the Hero melts into the indulgent Husband, and the affectionate Father, the sublime may be said to give energy to the pathetic, in his interview with Andromache; and the pathetic to heighten the sublime. Admiration and love are the effects of their combined influence: and we feel the power of both, in every future action in which he is engaged. Let us add to this, that these sensations are raised to their greatest height by reflecting, that He, who stands so high in our own estimation, is approved by Jupiter, and protected by Apollo.

In these observations on the effect of the sublime on the Epic Action, I have considered this great characteristic in its lowest acceptation, as originating in human efforts, and as existing without the intervention of supernatural Agents. But, in this point of view, it will be difficult to contemplate the Marvellous, which we no sooner mention, than the agency of superiour Natures makes a part of our idea.—

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Some remarks however we may make, with propriety, on its importance, and particular efficacy.

As elevation and dignity are maintained by the Sublime in the Epopœa; the more immediate province of the Marvellous is to create interest by exciting aſtoniſhment. Of thoſe terms we are sometimes apt to confound the meaning, by not reflecting, that, though they often act in combination, yet they are by no means words of the same import. For, although it be true that, in its higheſt acceptation, the sublime includes the marvellous; yet it cannot be said, vice versa, that the marvellous includes the sublime. Wonder is excited by strange and new objects; sublimity is expressive of their native grandeur, and majesty; of which Novelty may improve the effect, although it cannot create the originals: and habit, which effectually removes the former, leaves the latter unimpaired. It is no difficult matter to hold up the fallen Archangel, an an object of astonishment to human Beings: but the genius of Milton was neceſſary to breathe sublimity into the figure.

It has been said, that the effect of the Marvellous is to create astonishment.—Aristotle terms it delightful;* and the Ancients in general appear to have made more frequent excursions into this province, than the restricted taste of later ages would approve in those who might imitate their example. This great Philosopher sets almost no bounds to the use of the Marvellous in the Epic Narrative, which he says may be ΑΛΟΓΟΝ, irrational, beyond, or without reason. By this term he moſt probably means, not that it may be ſuch as a rational mind would reject, or even disapprove upon just principles; for there is no tribunal to which we can appeal against Reason, whose decisions are ultimate and irreversible; but that it may contain additions to a narration of events, in whose formation or arrangement reason bears no principal part, as it is their purpose to excite admiration. This, if we would not carry the matter too far, may be understood without difficulty. For, although impartial Reason may be said to exclude admiration from the series of argument; yet this power of the mind may approve of the admission of the marvellous on certain occasions, and within just limitations: and it is in this view that Aristotle has most probably considered it.

To

* Θαυμαςὸν ἐςι ΗΑΤ. De Art. Poet.

To raise astonishment, and to excite interest, are acts that are indissolubly connected; and may be termed words of the same import. But I observed formerly, that there are certain limits within which the marvellous must be restricted; bounds which it cannot overleap, without occasioning disgust. This will always be the case when representations are either unnaturally strained, as when actions are said to have been performed by a man, to which human power is not adequate; or when a part is assigned to the mere creatures of imagination, whom we cannot trace to any original, or even believe to have had existence. Of those, the reader will find many examples in the eccentric sallies of Ariosto, and of these, in the rich allegories of Spencer.—

Quodcunque ostendis mihi sic; incredulus, *odi.*

THE difficulty, therefore, of rendering the marvellous an acceptable branch of the Epopœa, lies in its adaptation to the Actors of whatever quality, so justly as not to exceed the bounds of credibility, and not to violate that licence which has ever been granted to poetic fiction. If it should be inquired, whether this characteristic may not be *effaced* from the work of the Epic Muse, and whether *probable events*, as a more rational entertainment, may not be substituted in its place; I should answer; that an attempt of this nature would probably be unsuccessful, not only by being opposed to the rules and practice of the most eminent among the ancients; but by being alfo irreconcilable to considerations that arise from the nature of the subject. We need only reflect, to be convinced of the truth of this remark, that a recent event cannot be the theme of an Epic Poem, because the dignity of the Epic Muse is improved by distance, and by a veil of obscurity. All her fascinating powers would lose their influence by being seen in nearer prospect. The fictions likewise, that are necessary to distinguish poetical from historical detail, lose all their energy when they are thus brought immediately before us; and the objects of a distant age, that would have raised admiration amidst an assemblage of congenial forms, would, in a groupe of dissimilar and familiar appearances, be regarded with indifference, or perhaps rejected with contempt.

LET us suppose then, that an Epic Poet makes choice of some remote but great event as his subject, over which a veil is cast by the imperfection of historical record, and the obscurity of traditionary report; is it not plain that his action must exhibit

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the manners of the times in which we suppose that it was carried on: To an age distinguished by Heroes, and by the deeds of heroism, he cannot do justice without describing simple manners, arduous enterprises, and efforts of valour, which may be rendered more marvellous than those of late ages; as we have reason to believe, that men, before they were emasculated in great cities by the enfeebling refinements of luxury, possessed powers of body, as well as an energy of mind, by which they undertook and accomplished the most perilous atchievements. If we pause a little therefore here, and contemplate the subject in the light in which it is placed before us, it will appear, that we sit down to peruse an Epic Poem with the expectation that our minds will be elevated, and our angry passions soothed into tranquillity, by attending to the deeds of Heroes, and by listening to the harmony of numbers. In the same manner we expect to be entertained by new, extraordinary, and therefore marvellous events, suited to the practice and popular opinions of men in the early ages of society. So necessary indeed is this marvellous exhibition to an Epic Poem, that in the judgment of an intelligent reader, it will be deemed essential; as being characteristical of the age of which it is descriptive. Without it, the Poem would resemble an historical picture, of which the principal figures were either thrown into the back ground, so as scarcely to be perceptible; or omitted altogether, so as to spoil the effect of whatever remained. Thus it is obvious, that the marvellous or wonderful rises as naturally from the Epic action as the sublime; and that it is by their co-operation that this branch of the Art is brought to perfection.

Upon the whole, it appears, as the result of the preceding series of observation, that the Epopœa, while it admits all the beauties both of expression and of sentiment, whereby other species are peculiarly distinguished, appropriates whatever excites admiration, as being immediately within its own province. I mean not at all to say, that many strokes of sublime description, and many examples of the marvellous, that create interest without exceeding the limits of credibility, may not be found in Dramatic and Lyric Poetry, as well as in other provinces of the Art. Of the two former, those great characteristics are indeed parts, without which their effect, in many cases, would not be complete. It is however in the Epic Action alone, that their power is displayed in its utmost extent, as the Poet has

here an occasion of placing his characters in every point of view; of raising these by trial, expanding by intercourse, and heightening by illustration. For the completion of purposes so various, the range even of the Drama, of which the action is circumscribed within narrow dimensions, is not sufficiently comprehensive.

THUS far I have endeavoured to define the sphere, and to estimate the effect of the Sublime and the Wonderful, in the highest poetic department; of which, it will be obvious, that they form essential and indispensable perfections. It is now proper to enter into the question concerning Machinery, as a mean by whose use, these Epic excellencies may be obtained in their greatest latitude of acceptation. Some observations on this question will sum up what this branch of the subject seems farther to require.

THAT the high degree of admiration wherewith we contemplate the Heroes of the Epic Fable, excites interest, and arrests attention, beyond any other cause, to the conduct of the action; has been evinced in the preceding part of this Dissertation; wherein we have also seen, that the Sublime of composition, and the Marvellous of event, conduce as principal means towards the attainment of this purpose.* In order to prove that those mighty efforts of imagination cannot have their full effect without the intervention of superiour Intelligences, I shall consider each apart from the other, and endeavour to shew, how far the exertions of this power are improved by their influence, and what would be the consequence of its ceasing to operate.

IN general we may observe, that if to raise admiration be an ultimate end of the Epopœa, he will most effectually gain it, who without exciting unpleasant sensations, can elevate the mind to sublime conception by subjects that are suited to his purpose. But the exercise of Heroism in raising this passion, is comprehended within bounds that are prescribed to it by reason, and probability. The actions, however noble, are still human actions: and we may say to the Actor without presumption in any situation; "Hitherto canst thou go, and no further." The sublime therefore is withheld in its ascent, by limits which it cannot overpass; and our admiration is imperfect, at least in degree, by being confined within boundaries of circumscribed dimension. By the introduction of Beings of superiour nature

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and order, these limits cease to impede the mind in its exertion; and Imagination, left to expatiate at large on an unbeaten field, gives form, magnitude, and power to Intelligences, to whom is assigned the disposal of events.

To this general view of the subject, I shall now add evidence that immediately respects the importance of Machinery, by tracing its effect on the greatest, and most conspicuous of poetical excellencies. With this purpose I shall consider separately, the sublime of description, of sentiment, and of character, as deriving a degree of improvement from the action of superiour Intelligences in the Epopœa, which will be best understood by being compared with passages of similar import in each, wherein the Machinery ceases to operate.

I include within the term *description*, in the present case, not only external scenery, of whatever nature, as a favourite theme of imagination; but those delineations of intelligent Beings that are expressive of character, and are, on that account denominated with propriety, picturesque. In the first sense of this epithet, as it relates to pastoral scenes, and to those natural appearances that are objects of sight, I need not add any thing to the remarks on the effect of animation, which the reader has seen in the first part of this Dissertation.† To those who may ask, why we should wander into an ideal world in search of excellencies that may be found in the objects of visible creation; in stupendous mountains, in craggy precipices; in the structure and decorations of the world which we inhabit, or even in the far-extended range of planetary revolution; it was observed in answer, that no descriptive powers can keep the mind awake to scenes of still life, unless these be the residence of animation, and thought. Such objects may indeed be of much use to Philosophers, to whom their nature, materials, laws, &c. may be successively subjects of speculation. But in Poetry a few masterly strokes of the first descriptive painters, leave little new to be copied by their followers. We cannot therefore have a more striking proof of the use of machinery, than when we find that it is thus insensibly adopted as a mean of exciting attention in works of pure description, which by this expedient are rendered interesting. To maintain the sublime in exhibiting this stupendous magnificence, it is necessary that the Beings who operate in the Machinery, should be proportioned to the magnitude of the provinces over which they preside.

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† See p. 4 and 5.

CONNECTED with these, is a species of natural Phenomena that excite, as soon as they are mentioned, ideas of the grand, and terrible. Of this nature are volcanos, earthquakes, inundations, which respect the external frame of the world; and thunder, lightning, storms, and whirlwinds, as agitating the atmosphere that surrounds it. Let any reader who would judge concerning the comparative power of machinery, in giving animation and sublimity to those great appearances; contrast the most poetical description of their effects, with an exhibition of them as brought about and conducted by some ruling Divinity; he will be immediately sensible of the *vivida vis animi*, that breaks out in the latter with peculiar energy, and influence. Let us try, in order to judge more effectually of this matter, descriptions of two circumstances of nearly the same kind, and the work of the same Author; of which the difference lies in the want of machinery in one case, and of its operation in the other. Virgil, in describing the burning of Troy, places the whole scene before the reader, by the following well known illustration:

> In segetem veluti, cum flamma furentibus Austris
> Incidit; aut rapidus montano flumine torrens
> Sternit agros, sternit sata læta, boumque labores
> Precipitesque trahit sylvas: stupet inscius alto
> Accipiens sonitum saxi de vertice Pastor. Æneid. L. 2.

IT would be useless to apply the various parts of this image to its original, as just, appropriate, and sublime. Every reader of taste will do this for himself.—But let a reader of this character turn to the first book, where he will find the tempest that scattered the fleet of Æneas, prepared by Juno, guided by Æolus, and composed by Neptune. He will *feel* the superiour spirit which these Operators communicate to the action.

> ——Venti, velut agmine facto,
> Qua data porta ruunt, et terras turbine perflant.
> Incubuere mari, totumque a sedibus imis
> Una Eurusque Notusque ruunt, &c.

THE sedate majesty of Neptune, when raising his head above the agitated ocean, he *looks* the scene into tranquillity, is one of the most beautiful and sublime passages of the Æneid. Of Earthquakes, Volcanos, &c. we may observe in the same manner, that the mind is more powerfully impressed by considering these con-

convulsions of the Globe, as occasioned by Beings who are imprisoned within its orb, and who shake their prison walls in struggling to get loose; than by a philosophical account of their causes. Each method might however produce its proper effect; one by impressing conviction, and the other by raising admiration.

UNDER the head of descriptive poetry, it was observed, that we include delineations of intelligent Beings, that are expressive of character, and are termed picturesque. Here, in placing before the mind a Being of superiour nature, the Poet may rise to a degree of sublimity, which will be vainly attempted by him whose theme is any effort of human valour, or excellence. Achilles appears at no time greater, than when he prepares to meet Hector, who draws his sword, and rushes upon him.

> Nor less Achilles his fierce soul prepares,
> Before his breast the flaming shield he rears.
> Refulgent orb! above his fourfold cone
> The gilded horse-hair sparkled in the sun,
> Nodding at every step: (Vulcanian frame!)
> And as he moved, his figure seem'd on flame.*

BUT will this picture of him in all his glory, drawn by so great a master, bear to be compared with that of the fallen Archangel of Milton, deprived of his original splendour, and in circumstances of the deepest dismay?

> As when the sun, new ris'n,
> Looks thro' the horizontal misty air,
> Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,
> In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
> O'er half the nations, and with fear of change
> Perplexes Monarchs; darken'd so, yet shone
> Above them all th' Arch-Angel: but his face
> Deep scars of thunder had entrench'd, and care
> Sat on his faded cheek.

WHEN Ajax, or when Achilles join battle with Hector, does the majesty, or intre-

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* Ωρμηθη δ' Αχιλλευς, μενε& δ' εμπλησατο θυμον
Αγριω· προσθεν δε Σακ& τερνοιο καλυψε
Καλον, δχιδαλεον· κορυθι δ' επενυε φαεινη.
Τετραφαλω, καλαι δε περισσειοντο ιθειραι
Χρυσειαι, ας Ηφαιστ& ιει λοφον αμφι θαμειας. Iliad. xxii.

intrepidity of the Combatants equal that of Satan, standing opposed to the last Enemy?

> On th' other side, Satan alarm'd,
> Collecting all his might, dilated stood
> Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved,
> His stature reach'd the sky; and on his crest
> Sat Horrour plumed!

YET if Milton rises above Homer in these, and in other situations of his Satan; the reader will observe, that the English Poet derives his superiour excellence merely from the dignity of this Personage: for the Greek is surpassed in sublimity by no writer, when he contemplates the Author of nature, or even when the inferiour Deities are his subject.

I observe only further on this head, that Ossian has equalled, if not surpassed, whatever ancient or modern Poetry can boast of picturesque, in his description of the Ghost of Crugal; which cannot be read without some degree of the feeling that would be excited by a visit from the Mansions of the Dead. "A dark red stream of fire comes down from the Hill. Crugal sat upon the beam.—His face is like the beam of the setting moon. His robes are of the clouds of the hill.—His eyes are like two decaying flames. Dark is the wound in his breast. The stars dim-twinkled through his form; and his voice was like the sound of a distant stream." This was written at a period when tales of Spectres made a part of the national creed, which the Celtic Bard naturally employed as machinery.

As the sublime of description is thus heightened in the Epopœa by the introduction of celestial Agents; we shall find in the same manner, that they impart this quality to the sentiments, and moral observations that arise naturally from the events. This affirmation will be best illustrated by an example of the same sentiment expressed by a human, and supposed to be uttered by a Divine Person.—Glaucus, in the sixth book of the Iliad, compares human life with great significance to a natural object.

> Like leaves of trees the life of man is found,
> Now green in youth, now withering on the ground;
> Another race another spring supplies,

They

They fall successive, and successive rise:
So generations in their course decay, &c.*

THIS comparison, which has propriety when pronounced by a human Being, acquires dignity when it is expressed by Apollo.

To combat for mankind
Ill suits the wisdom of celestial mind:
For what is man? calamitous by birth,
They owe their life and nourishment to earth;
Like yearly leaves, that now with beauty crown'd
Smile on the sun; now wither on the ground:
To their own hands commit the frantic scene,
Nor mix immortals in a cause so mean.†

THIS is language, which a Being of superiour order may pronounce concerning creatures of inferiour nature with a compassion, that places before them their own comparative meanness, and insignificance. Peculiar meaning and emphasis are communicated to it by the Speaker, who by using it, transforms a trite remark, that passes over the mind without much attention, into a lesson of humility.—And in the present instance, supposing Apollo to be out of the question, any farther than as an appellation by which we are reminded of the spiritual Beings who surround us; the words have efficacy, by bringing into our view a thought that communicates instruction.

ON this part of my subject, I observe only farther, that to the sublime of description, in an enlarged acceptation of the term, and of sentiment, as heightened by the Machinery of the Epopœa; we may add that of character, as belonging to it more particularly than any other.

It

* Οιη περ φυλλων γενεη, τοιηδε και Ανδρων.
Φυλλα τα μεν τ' ανεμος χαμαδις χεει, αλλα δε θ' υλη
Τηλεθοωσα φυει, εαρος δ' επιγιγνεται ωρη·
Ως ανδρων γενεη, η μεν φυει, η δ' απολησι.

† — ουκ αν μοι σαοφρονα μυθησαιο
Εμμεναι, ει δη σοι γε, βροτων ενικα, στολιζω,
Δειλων, οι φυλλοισιν ικελοτις, αλλοτε μεν τε
Ζαφλεγεις τιθεθυσιν, αρουρης καρπον εδοντες,
Αλλοτε δ' αυ φθινυθουσιν ακηριοι· αλλα ταχιστα,
Παυσωμεσθα μαχης· οι δ' αυτοι δηριαασθων. Iliad. xxi.

It has been already evinced, that setting machinery aside, this species of the grand is obtained by repeated efforts of the understanding, assisted by invention, exerted in placing some human character in a conspicuous and elevated point of view, so as to be an object of admiration. This task is effected with difficulty; and when effected, we obtain only the lowest order of the sublime, that which originates in, and is wholly constituted by human exertion. When we introduce Intelligences of superiour nature, all this labour is saved: A great Being is presented before the mind, to whom it immediately assigns particular qualities. A character is therefore formed at once, wherein the powers of man are raised beyond their usual limit: and Imagination expands to embrace it. Hence arises the sublime of character in its highest perfection. But you are not, you say, interested in the fate or actions of such Intelligences. I shall examine this matter more particularly, when I come to state, and to obviate objections.* In the mean time, I would only observe, that admitting it be true, this is no reason why we should not be pleased with the sublime as a characteristic of genuine poetry, and of a plastic imagination. And it has already been evinced, that this excellence cannot be obtained without the aid of machinery, in any province of the Art.

To the observations that have already been made upon the Marvellous, it is not necessary that much should be added at present, as the case here is precisely the same as in the attainment of sublimity. A certain degree of it may be consistent with the spontaneous actions of man, arising from human passions, called out into exercise by various situations. But to that degree of it, which excites astonishment, or great admiration, the admission of celestial Beings is indispensibly requisite.—Hence of the four great rules, whereby Aristotle would regulate the Epic Action, two relate to the present subject: I mean, his second, that it ought to participate of fiction; and his last, that it should be heightened by the marvellous. Its participating of fiction, by being laid in a remote age, renders it more easy to introduce the marvellous: and it is obviously with the purpose of establishing the latter of those rules, that the former is proposed.

Thus I have endeavoured to examine, at some length, one of the few subjects which has not hitherto been investigated in all its latitude of acceptation, either by ancient,

ancient, or modern Critics. In behalf of the Ancients, I may indeed suggest as an apology, that they never thought of treating this matter scientifically; because of Epic Machinery it never occurred to them that any objection would be made to the use. Of the plea of antiquity the objectors are indeed deprived. But that, although a presumptive evidence against them, must lose its force, if it can be proved that their objections are well founded. Let us now see, in order to have a full view of every part of the present subject, what the authors of this new expedient for improving the Epic Fable, say in its defence.

PART SECOND.

[ANSWER TO OBJECTIONS:—ACCOUNT OF THE MACHINERY OF BRITANNIA.]

Audi alteram partem has become a proverbial saying, and is, I believe, most commonly in use among men of candour and impartiality. A compliance with this rule will lead to an examination of objections that have not yet been obviated.—After having endeavoured to answer, in estimating their weight, whatever has been urged against the use of machinery; the reader will indulge me in the liberty of giving some account of that which is adopted in the following Poem.

The very ingenious Author of an Essay on Epic Poetry proposes objections of his own to the introduction of Machinery, in the Poem itself; and, in a note subjoined to it, has transcribed those of the celebrated Author of Elements of Criticism. I shall here make some observations on the strictures of both Authors. And I beg that the reader will consider me as being drawn upon this occasion into the present

argument, merely by the natural desire of justifying my own choice, which, opposed alone to such authorities, might be censured as improper, and myself considered as adopting a practice which I am unable to defend.

THE objections of the Author of Elements of Criticism to the use of Machinery in the Epopœa, are principally the following.—"It is," he says, "very different "from the poetical privilege of animating insensible objects: and yet these two "things are jumbled together in the reasoning. It gives an air of fiction to the "whole, and prevents that impression of reality which is requisite to interest our "affections, and to move our passions: lastly, it prevents an Epic Poet from gain-"ing his ultimate purpose; because virtuous emotions cannot be raised success-"fully, but by the actions of those who are endowed with passions and affections "like our own, that is, by human actions; and no moral instruction can be drawn "from beings who act not upon the same principles with us. Homer's Gods "were authorised by the religion of his country; but fictions seldom have a good "effect that transgress the bounds of Nature: machinery therefore, upon the "whole, can be of use only to the lower rank of writers, and can be relished by "no other readers, than those of a fantastic taste, and irregular imagination."—Concerning this last affirmation we may observe, in passing, that, if Homer be excepted from the number of those who possess fantastic taste, and irregular imagination; Virgil and Milton rank in the lower order of writers, of whom these qualities are characteristical: for, if the readers who relish Epic Machinery be of this class, surely the authors who invented, or made use of it, must lead the procession. But let us examine his reasoning.

HIS first remark is, that "the use of machinery is very different from the "poetical privilege of animating insensible objects: yet these two things are "jumbled together in the reasoning." For the truth of this affirmation, we have no other authority than the Author's ipse dixit, as he has not thought proper to confirm it by *any* reasoning. I know not indeed perfectly what is understood by *an animation of insensible objects*, which Poets are permitted to exercise as a privilege. An ancient Poet would have said of a volcano, that the mountain shook, trembled, and vomited forth streams of fire, motions that are inconsistent with total insensibility. But, if you inquired into the cause of this commotion, he would

would have told you, that Enceladus, being tired of lying always in the same posture, shook the mountain, and the Island of Sicily, in his attempt to turn round. Here however, he would not have meant to affirm that the mountain itself was animated, any more than a mason would ascribe the quality, implied by this term, to the stone which he might remove from its situation, in order to place it in a wall. It is indeed true, that a despairing swain, who laments the rigour of his Mistress, may pour out his complaint to trees and rocks in a remote solitude; and may address these as objects that have animation. But here it cannot be said, that things essentially different are jumbled together in the reasoning: for those objects become as much the machinery of the piece as soon as it is supposed that they are animated, as the superiour Natures who exist in the Epopœa. And we see, in their imagined existence, how naturally a Poet contemplates *life* in every scene that passes before his imagination. It ought however to be observed, that addressing the insensible members of any body as if they had life, is not the same thing as actually conferring it. The sole instance of this kind worth mentioning, that I remember to have met with in the work of any *ancient* Poet, is the story of the bleeding myrtle that is said to have been the mansion of Polydorus. It is related in the third book of the Æneid, and is perhaps the only instance in which the correct and elegant Virgil has violated, not more indeed the laws of the Epopœa, than those of Nature and of credibility.

It is therefore probable, that by "animating insensible objects," this author means nothing more, than the animation which a Poet may be said to impart to every scene, and in some sense, to every object that passes before him, by means of Intelligences who people all parts of his domain. Here I agree with his Lordship, that the Poet may claim his privilege. But, the reader has already seen that these are the Beings who operate in machinery, of which this writer is not the advocate. Let us follow him therefore, to his next objection, as his first seems to be inadequate, in whatever light it may be viewed.

"The poetical privilege of animating insensible objects, is founded, he says, "upon a natural principle, which the other (Machinery) is not." This is talking quite at random. Why has he not told us what this natural principle is; and why has he not proved that Machinery is not founded upon it? To general affirmations

tions unsupported by evidence, a plain negative is the proper answer. In the present case, however, I have proved in a former part of this Dissertation, that this poetical privilege, and Machinery, which I cannot distinguish from it, are founded upon *the same* natural principle, in whatever light either one or other may be contemplated; the desire of rouzing attention, and of dignifying description by a succession of interesting events.*

WHAT follows is more plausible, and apparently to the purpose. "Machinery," (it is said) "gives an air of fiction to the whole, and prevents that "impression of reality which is requisite to interest our affections."

THIS observation, if it has any force, may be applied to all extraordinary events whatever. And if we believe what this Author owns, that Pagans did believe, and what Christians are taught to acknowledge, that superiour and invisible Agents are often employed in conducting the government of Nations, as well as the affairs of individuals; the cause of "this air of fiction" will lose a great part of its force. For, in this case, a Poet avails himself only of the belief of general superintendence, in order to accomplish an end, towards the attainment of which all agree in thinking that this superintendence is indispensibly requisite. And he suits the departments wherein his Agents are occupied, to the motives whereby we suppose that they are actuated.

BUT let us take the matter as his Lordship represents it.—How is this evil to be remedied?—By expelling from Epic Poetry the Sublime and the Marvellous.—And for what reason?—Because an impression of reality is requisite to interest our affections, or to move our passions.—True.—But does it follow, that, because I withhold my belief in one case, I should repel my feeling in another? Let us bring this matter to the test. The Iliad abounds in Machinery. Animation may be said to pervade every part of it. I have no belief whatever in the Gods of the Iliad.—Yet when they are brought before me by the power of a splendid and creative imagination, I share at the instant in all their employments. But does the despotism of Jupiter, the disobedience of Juno, the madness of Mars, the rebellion of Neptune, &c. circumstances so strange, and so foreign to celestial natures, prevent me from

* P. 4, 5.

from sharing the tenderness of Andromache; from being pleased with the beauty of Hellen; from following to his last scene the Guardian of his Country with an anxious solicitude; and from dropping a tear, with a whole disconsolate people, over the mangled remains of a Hero who had fallen in their defence? It is needless to multiply examples. The province of superiour, and that of human agents in Epic Poetry are perfectly circumscribed, and separate. And the mind, unembarrassed in distinguishing their departments, considers the former always as operating causes, by whom the actions of the latter are influenced. Those indeed are themselves secondary Agents in one sense, as the first great Cause is constantly kept in view, to whom all other Beings are subservient. I appeal in the present case, more to the feelings of the reader, than to his understanding. If by these he be rendered sensible that the preceding observations are well founded, it is plain that this Author is mistaken in affirming, that "Machinery prevents that impression of "reality which is requisite to interest our affections."

LET us follow him in his next objection. "Virtuous emotions cannot be raised "successfully but by the actions of those who are endowed with passions like our "own: and no moral instruction can be drawn from Beings who act not upon the "same principles with us."

THIS is true: but it is what logicians term a Petitio Principii (begging the question.) I grant that "actions founded upon the same principles as our own," are necessary to excite virtuous emotions in our minds. But, I maintain, at the same time, that it is always supposed by us, that the Beings who preside over human actions are governed by the same principles, and impelled by the same passions as ourselves, for this obvious reason; that we cannot form an idea of rational Intelligences, who act upon other principles, or who are impelled by other passions.—We say that men are actuated, in the commerce of life, by rage, anger, hatred, love, pity, benevolence, &c. When we bring Agents of a higher order upon the great Drama, their actions, though they be suited, in kind, to their power, yet arise ultimately from the same causes as our own, and therefore may be termed in some sense, *human actions*. The only remaining subject of cavil, that they are not performed by Human Creatures, cannot abate the force of any moral instruction which one reasonable Being may convey to another. On the contrary, we have

seen

seen that a moral observation, or lesson, acquires an emphasis, and produces an effect, when uttered by a celestial Being, which it loses when pronounced by one man to another.*

But "Fictions," our Author observes, "seldom have a good effect when they "transgress the bounds of Nature." Here, I am again somewhat at a loss to find out the meaning of "transgressing the bounds of Nature." Fictions, that transgress the bounds of Nature, transgress also those of credibility, as has been already evinced.† Persons therefore, thus marked, cannot be admitted as Actors in the Epic Fable: and it is not to such Actors that the words bear application. To transgressing the bounds of Nature, therefore, the Critic cannot affix any stronger meaning than Aristotle comprehends in the term ΑΛΟΓΟΝ, beyond or without reason, in the sense that was applied to this term.‡ But here, unfortunately, his Lordship and the Greek Critic are on opposite sides of the question. For, the latter maintains, that the marvellous may be carried thus far, because its professed purpose is to raise admiration: and he assigns, as has been already shown, the reasons for which greater licence respecting this matter, may be used in the Epopœa, than in the Drama.‖ Here, it may be proper to observe, that Horace, in the same spirit, distinguishes with great propriety, the "speciosa miracula" of an Epic Poem, upon which the mind dwells with an interesting solicitude, from actions which by violating all truth and credibility, would excite abhorrence and indignation on the stage.

——Speciosa Miracula,
Antiphaten, Scyllam, et cum Cyclope, Charybdin.

But in the Drama——

Multa tolles ex occulis, quæ mox narret facundia præsens.
Aut in avem Progne, Cadmus mutetur in anguem:
Quodcunque ostendis mihi sic, incredulus odi.

But, with Lord Kames, the ΤΟ ΘΑΥΜΑΣΤΟΝ (the Marvellous,) of Aristotle, and the speciosa miracula of Horace are equally fictions that transgress the bounds of Nature, or exceed those of reason; and cannot therefore be of use. On the subject of the marvellous, what has been said in the preceding part of this Essay, supersedes any farther enlargement.

Thus

* See p. 33. † P. 22, 23. ‡ ibid. ‖ p. 17.

THUS I have examined, and have endeavoured to answer the objections of this eminent Critic to the machinery of the Epopœa, in defence of the three great Originals, into whose immortal works the machinery that is admitted has been held in general admiration. And its Authors are now discovered, for the first time, to have had fantastic taste, and irregular imagination. I see methinks the Manes of this illustrious Triumvirate, eyeing with contemptuous indignation the *Hand*, that would tear from them the laurels with which the consent of mankind has invested their brows; by far their most brilliant, and prominent ornament!*

FROM the remarks of this Author on the present subject, I now proceed to make some observations on strictures thrown out with the same purpose, by the ingenious Author of an Essay on Epic Poetry; who gives the passage, that has been examined, a place in his notes. In the critique of Mr. Hayley, there is an apparent candour and impartiality, which impressed upon my mind a favourable prepossession of his character. And I am pleased to find, that after having in this candid spirit given fair play to modern authors on both sides of the question; he seems to suspend pronouncing a final judgment, with a mind open (as that of every dispassionate inquirer will be,) to the suggestions of unbiassed reflection.—It is therefore with some reluctance that I oppose, in the present case, the sentiments of a Writer, with whom I should wish to coincide in opinion.

IN his desire to explode machinery from Epic Poetry, Mr. H. represents the Muse as degraded by using it, although for the purpose of raising admiration.—And he applies promiscuously the terms Magic, Allegory, and the agency of Celestial Beings either as designations of the same import, or as inventions of equal inutility. The words Magic and Witch are made use of to justify his assertion, respecting the degradation of the Epic Muse, by the admission of such Partners of her sovereignty: by Allegory, when applied to the Operators in Machinery, he means to mark the weakness of these coadjutors, and the inefficacy of their efforts: and by placing Intelligences, of superiour nature and powers, in the same line with those

* I might here have given my Countryman Ossian a place to which he is well entitled. I have thus far however been influenced in suppressing his name, by the doubts that have been raised of his existence. See the note p. 39.

those who are the offspring of Fancy, or of Fascination, he seems to be of opinion, that all ought equally to be expelled.

I have thrown these circumstances, from the fifth book of the Essay, into one group, that I may comprise the sense of numbers, and of poetic amplification within as small a compass, as is consistent with perspicuity. To the representation that is here given of the inefficacy of Machinery in the Epopœa, the preceding Dissertation on this subject may be considered as an answer. And my readers attention, as well as my own thoughts, have been employed to very little purpose, if it has not been evinced beyond question, that an Allegory which gives to the Sublime and the Marvellous their greatest powers, and their highest elevation, brings no "feeble aid" to the Epic Muse. An edifice raised on a hill of sand, would not have been an object of admiration to Critics and Philosophers in the purest ages of antiquity. And "without admiration," (in the words of one of the first Critics of the present age, candidly quoted by Mr. Hayley,) "which cannot "be effected but by the marvellous of celestial intervention, I mean the agency of "superiour natures really existing, or by the illusion of fancy taken to be so, no "Epic Poem can be long lived. The pomp of verse, the energy of description, and "even the finest moral paintings, will stand the Poet in no stead."* Far therefore from degrading, we have seen that Poets in all ages meant to invest the Epic Muse in the Assembly of celestial Beings, with attendants suited to her dignity, and to the purposes which she keeps constantly in view.

It may here be proper to observe, that the term Allegory admits of two acceptations. In one sense, it may be termed an image to which the original, or prototype, bears in some circumstances a striking resemblance; but which, as the mere creature of imagination, retains its allegorical meaning no longer, than while the mind dwells on these points of similarity. In another sense, certain departments, or spheres of action, may be consigned in our estimation to Beings that have existence; but whose nature and conduct must be suited with strict propriety to their various provinces, and occupations. Thus far however such persons may be denominated allegorical, as a certain line of action is prescribed to each by the province

* Letters on Chivalry and Romance.

vince over which he presides, or by the element whereof he is the Representative; and from this line he cannot deviate without violating the nature and order of things.

In the first of those senses, an allegorical representation may be admitted with great beauty and propriety into poetical composition, and particularly into the higher branches of the Art; either when an Author judges it necessary to "speak "in Parables," as not finding it convenient, or perhaps *safe*, to express his meaning in plain language; or when he uses a figurative diction, as the most energetic and pleasing. Of this nature is the celebrated Ode of Horace, addressed to the Republic.

> O Navis, referunt in mare te novi
> Fluctus! &c.

Here, when we have discovered the allegorical import of the term *Navis*, we never lose sight for a moment of either subject of comparison; without which we would cease to mark the purpose, and to admire the ingenuity of the Poet. And as soon as we cease to think on the substituted resemblance, the original object resumes its natural aspect. But with the Homeric Fable, the case is widely different. The allegory here is philosophical, as we have already seen; and it is not necessary that an ordinary reader should comprehend its meaning, in order to receive entertainment. Juno and Apollo may be contemplated as beings distinct from the elements which they occupy, or the dominion which they exercise. And a thousand readers of the Iliad will enjoy the sublime, and marvellous of the Poem, whose pleasure is not abated by being unacquainted with its philosophy. Hence, among the readers of this divine work in ancient ages, the vulgar were entertained by the actions of Beings who were the principal objects of national theology; while a Philosopher would feel, superadded to this satisfaction, the pleasure of marking the attention of the Poet, to the concealed, although ultimate purpose of his Fable, in their different employments, and destination.

Our Author's next reason for exploding machinery, is very different from those that have yet been mentioned. And I take notice of it more readily, as I shall be led, in answering it, into an examination of the effect of Machinery upon the Pathos of the Epic Narrative. After having observed that they are blind to Nature, who judge that the Muse must lose her ascendency over the mind, at the time when she

ceases to follow the wild sallies of imagination; he represents the power of an elegant Novel addressed to the heart, upon a mind that is susceptible of tender impressions. But I should injure the ingenious writer, by attempting to do justice to his sentiments in other words than his own.

> Behold yon pensive Fair, who turns with grief
> The tender Novel's soul-possessing leaf!
> Why with moist eyes to those soft pages glu'd,
> Forgetting her fix'd hours of sleep and food?
> Why does she keenly grasp its precious woes,
> Nor quit the volume till the story close?
> 'Tis not that Fancy plays her revels there, &c.
> 'Tis Action where Immortals claim no part,
> 'Tis Nature grappled to the human heart. Epist. 5.

THUS far I perfectly agree in opinion with this gentleman. I grant that a moral tale may be wrought up with events that will render it deeply interesting and pathetic, not only without the aid of invisible Agents, but even when the whole effect of the story would be spoiled by their ministration. A Novel is an imitation of actions and characters which we do or may meet with every day, in the general intercourse of life: and the author's diction ought to resemble as nearly as possible, in its tenour, the stile of conversation. But it is sufficient to observe, in the present instance, that the whole purposes of the Novelist are but a part of those ends which must be attained in the Epic narrative. Distress, in the most pathetic tale, or even in the Tragic Drama, cannot be wound up to a height which the Epopœa does not admit. But the sublime and marvellous are peculiarly characteristical of the latter, into which they are admitted in a degree that, as we have seen, is incompatible with any other species of composition.

UPON this branch of my subject, I wish to guard the reader against considering me as an Advocate for the use of Machinery, who, like a quack in vending his pill, might injure perhaps its real efficacy in one case, by recommending it as salutary in another, to which its qualities were not well adapted. I grant therefore readily, that the ultimate end of poetic machinery is not that of moving or interesting the passions. This task must be left, in a great measure at least, to human actors, whose passions, in order to produce any great effect, must correspond, and their hearts vibrate in union with those of their own species. Yet even here a consider-

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able effect may be produced by the agency of superiour Natures whom we believe to have existence. It may therefore be worth while to inquire in what degree the actions of these Beings may be said to move the heart, and to interest the affections of mankind.

It will be acknowledged that a great advance is made towards the attainment of this end, when we know that the Beings who command our attention by exerting their powers in our behalf, are ſupposed to be impelled by those principles and motives of action that influence our own conduct. That interest must arise from this consideration has been already evinced. But there are, as reflection will convince us, passions that co-operate with this inducement to excite and to awaken our affections. To Ghosts, who form the machinery of our great Celtic Bard, we *feel* that we are allied: and the mind passes, by an easy transition, from viewing the situation of the living, to contemplate the state of the dead. The "dark wound "in the breast of Crugal" calls up an idea of the combat in which he fell, "striv- "ing in the battle of heroes;" and the last words of the departing ſpirit, "Thou "shalt never speak with Crugal, or find his lone steps on the heath;" bring before us the past, the present, and the future; and leave the heart impressed by those sensations that arise from so solemn, and awful an interview. Here therefore, a man of genius would find the pathetic no difficult attainment. But Ghosts are now so little the objects even of popular belief, that unless in plaintive songs, or in descriptive pieces, they have not even poetical existence. For the age of Ossian however, we make allowance without hesitation. Of the celebrated Italian Poet, Taſſo, I need only to obſerve, that he lived at a period when the long night of the dark ages was just beginning to withdraw: and his mind received a bias from the false taste, and credulity of the times in which he flourished. His genius, at a more enlightened period, would have rejected with indignation, his inchanted forest, his Armida, and his whole magical apparatus; which, however it may sparkle before a vivid imagination, can have no connection with the heart. The reader has already seen, that this is not the case with the celestial Agents of the three great Epic Poets. It is therefore only farther necessary to inquire how far their influence in this great department may be said to extend.

The term Admiration, in its largest import, denotes wonder mixed with a re-

spect, and perhaps a partiality to which we yield upon some occasions with reluctance, as to an involuntary impulse which we are unable to repel. It will not be denied that daring enterprise, arduous effort, and unshaken fortitude, are, at all times, objects of this passion, whatever may be our opinion of the person who is thus characterised. Hence these may be termed natural qualities, on whose exercise admiration is inseparably attendant: for, in certain situations, we respect what we denominate the virtues even of an enemy. It must be obvious, with the least attention, that we cannot contemplate an enterprize with admiration, of which we are not immediately interested in the event. And it is equally plain that compassion in behalf of him to whom we look up with astonishment, must be excited, when the mighty efforts whereby these passions have been alternately stimulated, are finally unsuccessful. This compassion is in fact, a natural consequence of being interested in his concerns. The vast imagination of Milton, soaring in quest of an object fitted to its compass, and sublimity,

Beyond the visible diurnal sphere;

found in his SATAN, an Intelligence adapted to it in the First of created Beings: and the reader will find that a pity which he cannot repel, although he may be unable at the same time to justify its indulgence, is awakened by his preceding admiration of the great Archangel, when He stands "with faded splendour wan;" and when the stronger passions of indignation and hatred cease to operate. Thus far Machinery, at least Christian Machinery, may co-operate in its effect, with circumstances that move the passions, and interest the affections of men. If, however, the whole merit of an Epic Poem be comprised under the word *pathetic*, of which the various degrees correspond to its comparative excellence; the superiour Natures who form machinery, would not occupy the highest department of the scale. But we have seen that their purposes are of a different, and perhaps of a superiour kind. For the mind is raised by heroic actions, and noble sentiments, to an emulation whereby it is elevated above meaner pursuits. And the Genius of Milton is said to have been exalted to its height of excellence, by the amusements of his younger days; the wild of description, and the marvels of Romance.

I have been led into these remarks by Mr. Hayley's objection. But I have taken a large compass, more with the purpose of doing justice to my subject, than of answering

swering what he has suggested. For to his observation it is sufficient to reply; that the ends of Epic Poetry are various. The Pathetic is one of its provinces.—The Sublime and the Marvellous constitute another. I have proved beyond question, that these are distinct departments, of which the limits are ascertained, and never interfere. Why then should we not enjoy alternately the pleasure of both? The sublime does not prevent that we should feel the pathetic, nor the pathetic that we should be elevated by the sublime. They are like two streams that combine in adorning an extensive and beautiful landscape; one by its tremulous murmurs, impending precipices, umbrageous woods, and serpentine meanders; the other by the lofty summit of its cliffs, the roar of its distant waterfalls, and a tide, that arising from eminences dimly seen amidst the fluctuations of a cloudy atmosphere, receives in its progress, tributary streams; and rolls, with a majesty on which ADMIRATION is attendant, toward the ocean.

UPON the whole, it seems to be the result of our observations on the present subject, that if the inferiour branches of the Poetic Art derive adventitious beauty from machinery; surely no good reason can be assigned for excluding it from Epic, which is the highest, and most comprehensive of all. Homer wrote at an early period, and during an imperfect state of society, in the temperate climate of Greece. Ossian under the stormy heavens, and barren mountains of the North, composed also an Epic Poem.* The same objects were not known, but the same idea

* This fact, as was observed already, is called in question; a circumstance that is almost incredible, when we consider the evidence of its authenticity that has been laid before the Public; and the Names by whom that evidence is supported. Let us consider a little what that man must believe, who, in opposition to this weight of testimony, is convinced that the poems ascribed to Ossian, are not originals of a Celtic Bard rendered venerable by remote antiquity; but the work of the Translator, or of a Poet who lived in *any* stage of civilization. He must believe that this man, shutting his eyes and ears, to objects that were perpetually pressing upon his senses, was capable, in writing a large volume of descriptive Poems, to exclude so effectually every trace of scenes that were either the objects of his sight, or the themes of his conversation, as that no idea or term should bear the least relation either to one or other, in the whole course of his work; that a man of science and information, such as the Author of those Poems must have been under any political establishment, should (as his admirable Critic well observes, Crit. Dissert. p. 19) "admit no abstract ideas, "or general terms, as those of a Public, a Community, the Universe, an Ocean, &c." in works of which the subjects would have rendered it impossible that allusions to things of such importance and magni-

idea occurred to both, of raising admiration by means of superiour Intelligences introduced into the scene; although both were equally ignorant of their natures, and equally convinced of their existence. Of this concurrence it seems to be the consequence, that the present is a principle so immediately connected with the nature of the Epopœa, that, in congenial minds, it may be termed connate with the first traces of its Design. When, therefore, it is said that all this is incompatible with the dispassionate suggestions of Reason, which will prescribe to us a method of elevating our subject, and of rendering it interesting, without deviating from the contemplation of our own nature and actions; I observe in answer, that those rules, however useful they may be in philosophical disquisition, will not bear application to the machinery of Epic Poetry. All the generations of men, from the age of Homer to the present, have expressed their admiration of the Sublime and Wonderful in the action of the Epopœa. Now to set up the dictates of reason against this universal testimony, is, in effect, to reason down our feelings, at the time when, in their indulgence, we find a source of high and of innocent gratification. It is diminishing the number of the few enjoyments that life offers to us; a proceeding which unbiassed Reason will as little approve, in his philosophical votaries, as, among his religious Disciples, he sanctions the practice of applying his line to a plane which no line can measure, and his compass to a circumference that cannot be circumscribed.

AFTER

magnitude should have been uniformly avoided, had these existed at the time when they were written: that, laying aside as subjects of illustration, all human inventions, or facts that are made known to us by history or tradition, he should circumscribe the efforts of a rich and exuberant imagination, within the circle of natural appearances and phenomena, whereby his language was deprived of abundance, and his narration of variety: he must be convinced, that the characters, manners, discourse, sentiments, principles of belief, &c. that are maintained in so large and various a compilation, should harmonise so perfectly in the work of an Impostor, with the purest ancient simplicity, as that no internal evidence or trace of imposition can be discovered by the most discerning eye, and the most accurate investigation. Finally, by ascribing these Poems to the Translator, he must believe, that Gentlemen of the most unquestioned honour and veracity, who were induced by the best motives to inquire into the authenticity of this publication; who have examined the tradition, seen the originals, and compared these with the translation, have permitted that the most respectable Names should be used in support of a falsehood, of no emolument to the Public, and of no interest to themselves. He, who can believe all this, must be a *credulous* man indeed, and may be considered as such, even in an age that is distinguished beyond any preceding æra, by examples of *similar credulity!*

AFTER having written so much concerning the works of other men, the reader will now, I hope, indulge me in the liberty of giving some account of my own. In executing this task, I am sensible of that awkwardness and embarrassment which a man naturally feels, in enlarging upon a subject in which himself is principally interested. It was observed, however, in the beginning, that the reader will find his account in attending to some explanation of the principles upon which BRITANNIA is conducted, and particularly of the superiour Intelligences whose operation constitutes its machinery.

IN the former part of this Critique, I have endeavoured to defend the general subjects, and machinery of the Epopœa. But here I am called upon to account for my own. For, to the respectable names who have been mentioned as maintainers of modern theories in the present case, I must add that of Johnson on this occasion; not indeed as opposing the introduction of celestial Agents into an Epic Poem; but as no friend to the story of Brutus, which is the subject of the following work, or to blank verse, which I have adopted in carrying it on, in preference to rhyme.

1. IT is not necessary that I should say much in defence of the Fable; as a reader's opinion of the whole will be determined principally by the execution, concerning which he will judge for himself. The story of Brutus, a grandson of Æneas, landing in England, is told, or rather is translated, by Geoffry of Monmouth, from an ancient work. Mr. Bolton, an eminent English antiquarian, seems to be of opinion that it is *faithfully* translated, because it agreed throughout with a book which Henry, Archdeacon of Huntingdon, an English historian of some note, nearly contemporary with Geoffry, found in the Abbey of Beck in Normandy, wherein the same circumstances are related without variation. Of this fact our Author quotes a Mr. William Lambred as the witness, who collated the volumes with each other, and publicly testified their consonancy as historical narrations.* I mention these facts, in order to exculpate my friend Geoffry from the charge of having invented this story, which seems really to be void of foundation. And, although I am not

quite

* See the Article, Bolton Ed. in the General, Historical, and Critical Dict. where this curious subject is treated at length. V. 3.—P. 468.

quite so certain of its truth as Mr. Bolton appears to be; yet it surely has enough for my purpose. It is a tale not unsupported by evidence, and "drawn from the "bosom of the remotest antiquity." It is a great Action, as it respects the conquest, and first settlement of a powerful kingdom: it is involved in obscurity, and *therefore* admits the *Sublime*, and the *Marvellous*, of whose importance in the Epopœa the reader, I presume, is by this time convinced: it is *one*, as the series of events whereby the ultimate purpose is obtained, brings it gradually forward by an uninterrupted progression: finally, the Action may be rendered interesting by the various occurrences of which the Narrative admits an intermixture; dignified, by examples of ancient heroism; moral, by an exhibition of primitive manners at an early period of society; and instructive, by virtuous patterns of imitation, and observations of general utility that may be said to grow naturally out of the events.

LET us add, to the preceding enumeration of circumstances, that the story of Brutus seems to have been considered in the earliest, as well as in the most enlightened, ages, as a subject adapted to the Epic Muse. "It is not impertinent to ob-"serve, for the sake of those who are fond of the history of literature," (says a learned and celebrated Critic,) "that the very first poem that appeared in France "any thing like an epic poem, was on this identical subject of Brutus' arrival in "England. It was written by Master Eustache, so early as in the year 1137."† It is a well known fact (which our Author also mentions;) that Milton had a predilection for this subject;

> Ipse ego Dardanias, Rutupina per æquora, puppes
> Dicam, et *Pandrasidos*, &c. Epitaph. Damon.

and it may not be improper to take notice here, that a latter author (Hildebrand Jacob) wrote, what he calls an Epic Poem, on this very subject. That Pope made choice of it, however, is alone a recommendation by which all others are superseded. I need only to observe of his plan, as detailed by Mr. Ruffhead, that had he carried it into execution, there would have been an end of Brutus as the Hero of a future Epic Poem in any event; as no man, after him, would ever have tried the subject.

I am, I confess, perfectly at a loss to comprehend what our great Critic means, by

† Lives of the Poets, Vol. 4. p. 131.

by saying, " that the Actors in this fable are a race upon whom imagination has " been exhausted, and attention wearied."* By whom, and at what period were Actors introduced in the story of Brutus, upon whom imagination has been exhausted, and attention wearied? If this has been the case, and if these Actors coincide with those of BRITANNIA, I must beg that its author may not be charged with plagiarism, as he is altogether ignorant of their existence.

2. To the words " attention wearied," our author adds the following, " espe- " cially when it is invited in *blank verse*, which Pope had adopted with *great impru-* " *dence*, and I think without *due consideration of the nature of our language.*"† As a Lexicographer, Dr. Johnson certainly should have known the nature of the English Language, better than any man who has not studied it so minutely. Yet, the reader will excuse me for expressing a wish, that he had entered somewhat into detail on the present occasion; and instead of a bare affirmation, had specified to a reader who knows less of this matter than himself, in what respects the nature of the English language is repugnant to blank verse. Without such detail, a plain reader will find difficulty in believing that an Epic Poet can be said to discover great *imprudence* in following the track of a Master who had gone before him, and who left a pattern of imitation to his successors. It is true that our Author finds reasons for which blank verse was suited to Milton's subject, as he does indeed, for its adaptation in every work, wherein this mode of composition has been employed with success. Yet it appears to me unaccountable, that any work, and far more that works of magnitude, should have obtained universal approbation among a people, to the nature of whose language, blank verse, the selection of the Author, has incongruity, or even disagreement. I mean not there-

* Essay on the Writ. of Pope, p. 28.

† The reader ought to observe, that I take here for granted, upon our Author's testimony, that Pope meant to have written his Epic Poem in blank verse; although the Author of the Essay on his Writings and Genius informs us that he meant to have executed this work in rhyme. After having mentioned circumstances that would, he says, have disqualified Pope for representing the age of heroism, he goes on: " Add to all this, that it was to have been written *in Rhyme*, a cir- " cumstance sufficient of itself alone, to overwhelm and extinguish all enthusiasm, and to produce " endless tautologies, and circumlocutions;" a sentiment in which I have the honour to agree perfectly with this author, whose *general* ideas of poetry coincide indeed with my own.

fore, to give offence to the admirers of this great man, among whom I wish myself to be numbered, when I ascribe his peculiarity in the present, as in some other, instances,‡ to a spirit of fastidious criticism which he sometimes indulges; and to a choice, of which, enveloped in the splendour of Genius, we overlook the caprice.*

HAVING now finished the most unpleasant part of my task, I shall proceed, without farther obstruction, in giving some account of the following work.

I made choice of blank verse in the narration of BRITANNIA, upon trial and comparison, as being suited most properly to the subject. If I have erred, I cannot urge in my own behalf, the plea of inattention. I began the work in rhyme, in which I wrote about 150 lines of the first book. I then stopped, in order to see how the same sense would read in blank verse. I was pleased with the change. The poetical spirit of the passage appeared to be improved. I began to reflect that, in carrying on an original work of considerable length, admitting subjects of very different natures, and demanding a proportional diversity of composition; that species of it is fittest to be adopted, which may be suited, with greatest ease, to each of these successively. Rhyme, which in shorter poetical Essays, and indeed in the ordinary walk of the Muse, is well adapted to her spontaneous effusions, becomes strained and aukward as her themes vary in their nature, wind in their progress, and rise in their importance; "Her native wood-notes wild," are lost in the unvaried returns of rythmical cadence. Blank verse leaves imagination to range at ease through the various departments of the Epic Muse, released from a

* Of this nature, in my opinion, is the following remark on an epithet in Gray's Ode to Spring.—"There has of late," says he, "arisen a practice of giving to adjectives, derived from substantives, "the termination of participles; such as the *cultured plain*, &c. But I was sorry to see in the lines "of a *scholar* like Gray, the *honied* Spring." From these words we should naturally conclude, that Gray had himself framed the epithet *honied*, and that he had applied it improperly to Spring. But this epithet is not of late origin, and was never framed by Gray. Our author must have known, although he did not recollect, that the term is used by Milton in his Il Penseroso,

Hide me from day's garish eye,
Where the bee with honied thigh, &c.

‡ His censure of Gray's application of the term appears to me to be fastidious. Gray makes application of an epithet to the season in which honey is collected, which Milton with more strict propriety perhaps, but with less poetical beauty, applies to the insects who extract, and deposit it in their hives in that season. I see not what relation this has, in any sense, to the Poet's character as a *Scholar*.

state

state of bondage, to the enjoyment of freedom. The mind is no longer constrained to reject a picturesque epithet, or a happy expression, on account of the similar sounds which it might bring together within a short number of lines. It adopts these as they occur without hesitation; and, by the flexibility of this mode of versification, is enabled to make use of its own powers successively, to advantage.

THERE are two circumstances to which a writer ought to give particular attention in carrying on a work in blank verse, as the want of either will be essentially prejudicial to him. These are, giving proper variety to the pauses, and preventing the language of the *Poet* from degenerating into the tameness of prose. The frequent return of the same pauses has an effect of the same kind in reading, as monotony, in the voice of a public Speaker, has upon the ear. In both cases, attention is relaxed by perpetual uniformity; and the mind, impeded in its pursuit of variety, sinks down in an insipid and lethargic acquiescence. On the other hand, the provinces of prose, and of poetic composition, are as distinct, as the purposes to which works in either become subservient. One general remark however, may be made with propriety, on this subject. It is, that a prose author may make an incursion into the territory of his poetical neighbour, not only with impunity, but with advantage, if he can turn his acquisition to good account; whereas a Poet, on the contrary, far from encroaching in his turn upon the other, must not approach even the limit of his own possessions, in whose interiour regions he ought to fix his residence. In plainer language, a writer in prose may adopt poetical idioms upon some occasions, in order to illustrate an obscure doctrine, or give animation to a tedious deduction: but a Poet must not become prosaic, in attempting even to be perspicuous: a peculiar and characteristical elegance must be conspicuous in the simplest effusions of his fancy, to which, as to every other effort of the Muse, ornament is a necessary appendage, and harmony an indispensible companion.

OF the two circumstances above mentioned, we may observe, that a modulated ear will regulate the metrical pauses so as to give just variety to the measure: and where this is wanting in any case, the defect may be compensated, at least in a great measure, by attention. To preserve the genuine poetic diction untainted, in a work

work of length, executed in blank verse, and comprehending various and interesting subjects, is, indeed, a matter of much greater difficulty. Here the advantage is obviously on the side of rhyme, in which the regular return of musical terminations may supply, in the estimation of many readers, a real defect of poetic beauty, in the proper sense of that term, and even of copious and plastic imagination.—Tinsel may pass, in their judgment, for sterling gold, and the shewy embellishment of playful fancy, for the ornamental elegance of just illustration. In blank verse the fascination no longer exists. The Poet, unsupported by adventitious aid, must stand or fall by his own merit. It is, however, so difficult to maintain the poetic idiom at all times, in executing so comprehensive a plan as that of the Epopœa, that I consider it as almost impossible. And, in some cases, an attempt to keep it up, might be censured with propriety, as forced, and unnatural. Metaphors and images have an excellent effect, when judiciously applied in heightening the entertainment of a plain narrative, or in giving perspicuity to an abstract sentiment.—But, by an affectation of introducing these ornaments upon all occasions, especially in a work that is executed in blank verse, a Poet will expose his performance to just censure, if not to ridicule. Even the irradiations of Genius overpower the mind which they ought to enlighten and to elevate, when they break upon it without intermission. And illustrations of an inferiour nature, when brought in with the purpose of preserving an uniform poetic diction, are apt to disgust by their frequency, and to degenerate into quaintness and conceit. Hence, there is propriety and truth on many, though not upon all occasions, in the interrogation of the great Critic who has been already quoted, "When was blank verse without *pedantry?*"*

A question naturally arises from this account, with a reply to which, I shall close my observations on this branch of my subject. If, it may be said, the metaphorical expression, which may be termed the line whereby prose and poetry are separated, must be thus cautiously used, in the latter province, upon some occasions; how can the essential characters of the two species of composition be preserved so as that they may not run into each other? In answer to this, let it be observed, that there is the same difference, in general, between the subjects of a Poet, and those of

* Life of Akenside.

a Prose

a Prose author, in the strict sense of the latter term, as there is between the range of imagination, and that of understanding. The Poet, who makes choice of a didactic or philosophical argument, will render his work pleasing by poetical illustrations, judiciously selected, and properly introduced. In Epic Poetry, it is principally in some parts of the speeches, and in those parts of the narrative wherein minute circumstances are detailed, in order to preserve unity; that it is difficult to maintain the signatures whereby the Art is distinguished, without affectation, or constraint. Here, without attempting to throw a glare over passages, of which the principal excellence is simplicity, the Poet will prevent his language from becoming prosaic, by elegance, and by harmonious numbers. The latter character, in particular, will always have the effect of preserving it distinct from the language even of those authors in other departments of composition, whose subjects most nearly approach towards it. I have only to add farther, that, when we consider blank verse as admitting poetic idioms that are fitted to express the most comprehensive views of imagination, with all the glow of animating colour, and all the varieties of modulated inflection, it appears, as being suited more happily, by its solemn pauses, and general tenour, to the majesty of the Epic Muse, than any other heroic stanza, or mode of versification.

In these observations, the reader will, I hope, believe that I have no particular view to the following work, to which I know not with what propriety they may bear application. I have thrown out remarks on the various points that fell to be examined in the course of this Dissertation, without any other attention than to their propriety as being connected with its design.

3. A reader of BRITANNIA will soon discover the reason for which its author is an advocate in behalf of machinery. In that branch of it which he has adopted, some persons may be surprised that Pagan Divinities, (although they have no part in the action of the Poem,) are yet introduced in a work, wherein the Beings of superiour order are those of the Christian religion. Some of my ingenious friends have made a question, whether this conduct might not be censured, as admitting an intermixture of christian and pagan theology, between which there is invincible repugnance. I shall lay my reasons for choosing the course I have followed, as clearly as possible, before the reader, who will judge for himself of their power.

PAGAN

PAGAN Theology makes, properly speaking, no part of the machinery of BRITANNIA. Its Deities are introduced, by a necessary cause, into the work. But, they are, in the author's estimation, the offspring of Fancy; and no event is accomplished by their ministration. Whence comes it then, that they are brought into the fable?

A Poet is inspired by his Muse; and under the divine afflatus, if I may borrow an oracular term, future events are not only made known to him, but also their causes, as well as the Agents by whom they are carried on. The author's Muse, is the Guardian Angel of the Island that gives its name to the Poem. She makes known to him the *real* Actors in the revolution of events. Hence, in his narrative, he adopts the machinery that is supplied by revelation. The *human* agents, nevertheless, are not christians, but pagans, who worship false Divinities, and ascribe events to causes that have no existence. But surely it is not incongruous, that he who writes what is communicated, or is supposed to be communicated, by a celestial Being, should trace up occurrences to the causes of all operations; while the persons whose actions he records, having no guide to throw light upon their path, are misled by notions, whereof he perceives the fallacy, while he relates the effects. Indeed, under the influence of the Guardian Spirit who is invoked, and with the actors who are employed, in the following Poem, it is equally impossible to avoid making choice of christian machinery, as to exclude all mention of heathen Deities. The former presents to us the only superiour Natures who, under supreme government, influence human actions; while the latter, on the other hand, offer to our view, the Beings whom the immediate actors believed to preside over the universe, and who are therefore, naturally invoked by them in this character. Against this consequence, the reader will see that it is impossible to guard, without either exploding machinery altogether from the action, or overturning the fable.

IT will, no doubt, be observed, that a liberal use is made of the prosopopœia in the following work. Of Beings who are created in order to serve particular purposes, I can only say, that poetical license is not, I presume, violated either in the formation, or actions. It may be proper to mention the principal of these, in order to illustrate what is here advanced. In the second book, the tempest by which

which the fleet of Brutus is scattered among the isles of the Mediterranean, is painted, at least in my judgment, with more picturesque circumstances, by means of the Demons of the Earth who are employed in raising, and in conducting it; than it could have been by any description of mere elemental commotion, introduced with magnificence, and accompanied by desolation. These tools of an infernal agent, are said to have derived their existence from an union of Demons with a race of Intelligences, of whom the history of Greece, in the fabulous and heroic ages, not to mention other authority, abounds with an account, that brings them within the precincts of poetic ground. They are introduced in a single action, and to bring about an end, that is suited at the same time, to their power and disposition; and they disappear as soon as it is accomplished.

In the fourth book, the Ministers of divine vengeance form an assemblage of Beings who were new to Azrael, because it is supposed that they were created immediately after the fall. Here, nothing more is attempted, than to use a privilege which has never been denied to Poets, that of representing national calamities, or punishments, by Ministers of divine wrath, who inflict either one or other upon some signal occasion, by an authority derived from the Author of nature. It is only proper to observe further, that these Agents of Omnipotence are said to have been created at the time when sin and death became known to mankind; because, in a state of innocence, their existence would have been useless, as they must have lived without employment. And even without assuming the privilege wherein Poets are indulged, in the present case, it appears from the sacred writings, that God made use of a destroying Angel in punishing the impiety and obstinacy of Pharaoh, and that a Minister of the same nature was commissioned to inflict pestilence on the Jewish nation. In Ormul, therefore, I have only described the Angel whom David actually saw, standing on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite; a fact that is mentioned in the Poem.

There is, in Britannia, one other personification, of which it may be necessary that I should give some account, as being the boldest that is to be met with in any part of the work. It is the prosopopœia of Despair in the appearance of Bethphlegon, whom Satan carries along with him to earth, in order to obtain a final conquest over the army of Brutus. This Fiend is lodged in Hell, her natural and proper

proper mansion. A veil is cast around her, and she is chained to a rock, in a remote part of the fiery gulph; whence however, her shrieks are heard, and her influence is felt in some degree over the whole region; to signify that Despair will not obtain her full dominion, even in the infernal abodes, until the general consummation of all things, when she will be let loose to dwell for ever with her associates. She is enveloped in a double covering, at the time when Satan brings her to earth, where *Hope* forbids that she should fix her residence. At the time when the army of Brutus is in extreme distress, *the Author of Evil* removes the exteriour vesture, and places her in the midst of the host. Of her motions, and shrieks, when she feels for the first time, the rays of the sun, universal rout and confusion are the consequences. Her influence however, is spread more universally among the soldiers, than over their leaders; whose spirits we may suppose are supported by the hope of being speedily relieved. As soon as the action is in some measure restored, by the arrival of a party who had lain in ambush, her influence is at an end, and she is again precipitated to Hell.

If it should be asked, with what purpose I have made use of this prosopopœia, in order to accomplish the defeat of Brutus' army; I answer, that I complied, in following this course, with a principle that was laid down in the beginning of the Essay, and which has been kept in view throughout the whole of it; that "Ani-"mation" ought at all times to pervade every poetic description; and that this is the essential characteristic whereby the work of a Poet is distinguished from the plain narration of an Historian. Let me add, that it is more necessary to support this poetic stile in a work executed in blank verse, than in rhyme, however melodious. For, we have seen that in the latter, musical cadence may conceal in many cases, the defect of creative imagination; whereas in the former, it is only by uniform exertion, and continued energy, that this faculty can maintain the genuine poetic idiom, untainted by intermixtures that debase its excellence.

Although Giants are, I believe, new to Epic poetry, as principal actors on the scene; yet no apology is necessary for the introduction of these personages in the following work, nor for the great part which they maintain in the action. The Giants of Britannia are not Monsters of whom the existence exceeds credibility. On the contrary, I might have rendered them much more formidable than they

are,

are, under the sanction of the most respectable authority. Their magnitude and prowess are best known when they meet their enemies in battle. Here it will be observed, that their superiour stature and force, when compared with the soldiers of Brutus, are more than compensated by the rude construction of their arms, and by their total ignorance of military discipline; disadvantages, of which Romerus is sensible, in his combat with Clitander, when

> ——he felt how vain
> Untutor'd strength to match inferiour power,
> By skill directed,

and in many other parts of the work.

In fact, however, my principal inducement, in adopting this part of Geoffry's narrative, was the occasion which it gave me of introducing *new characters* into the action: and the claim of BRITANNIA to originality, if it has any, is derived from this circumstance. Common characters are too low for the Epic Muse; and those of distinguished eminence are pre-occupied so effectually by the great Masters of antiquity, as to exclude original strokes, in an exhibition of ordinary men, from any work of their successors. By bringing Giants upon the stage in the following Poem, I had occasion to maintain the predominance of qualities that distinguish the savage, amidst others which derive a *colour* from this original, whereby they are always impressed. In Gerontes, the ferocity of the Barbarian is united with latent timidity, and a sense of dependence, which he is ever solicitous to conceal. In his daughter Leontia, the same characteristic is conspicuous amidst female weaknesses, and foibles. In Vortiger, the rude and unprincipled villain is possessed of deep cunning, native sagacity, and the fascinating power of giving to falsehood the semblance of truth. He has plausibility in discourse, cowardice in action, and the greatest moral pravity in both. It is attempted to display, in Androgeus, the effect of good principles, when called forth by the improvement of early education. Scarcely does any tincture remain in his conduct, whereby we are reminded of his companions, unless perhaps at the time when he is rouzed into indignation by the supposed injustice and ambition of his enemies. Lastly, an assemblage of qualities that distinguish the savage, are united in Romerus, with almost unrivalled prowess, unshaken fortitude, an high sense of honour, and a native rectitude and dignity, which command the esteem of his enemies; and are sup-

ported uniformly to the last. As the sons of Brutus are supposed to have been the original Progenitors of the nations by whom Great Britain is peopled; the author has endeavoured to distinguish each by certain qualities, which it may be thought that they have imparted to their posterity, as being predominant features of the national character, in the general estimation of mankind. Thus, in the dignified manners, heroic courage, and noble qualities of Locrinus, an Englishman may see those whereby his more immediate descendants are particularly discriminated. The impetous heroism of Camber, stimulated by the powerful motives of emulation, and by the pride of ancestry, may be supposed to be the principal qualities of a people who are Aborigines of the country which they occupy. The qualities of Albanus, on account of his youth, are thrown into the shade. The Public, however, will judge, how far animated valour, acting in co-operation with good sense and discernment, qualify him to represent a nation, to whose general character, it is not denied that those virtues bear particular application. In this account, I beg to be considered by the reader, as having laid before him, rather the heads of what I *meant* to perform, than of what I have really executed, of which the latter must be left to his own judgment.

It may be proper to observe, before we leave this subject, respecting poetic composition in general, that men, whose minds are formed to relish its most exquisite beauties, become insensible to their impression, at least in a great measure, by permitting their attention to be wholly occupied by pursuits of different tendency, and effect. In the present age particularly, political and commercial speculations, suggested and brought forward in society, exclude attention to Arts that are cultivated in leisure, and retirement. Hence Poetry, deserted by its friends, is regarded by others with indifference, and is often marked by disapprobation. But although no Poet can now produce such effects as Lucilius is said to have done;* yet men who talk in this manner, practise a kind of self-imposition without knowing it: for few men are wholly insensible to the energy of what may be termed poetic composition.

When

* Ense velut stricto, quoties Lucilius ardens
Infremuit; rubet Auditor, cui frigida mens est
Criminibus; tacita sudant præcordia culpa.——Juven. Sat. 1. a fin.

When Horace says,

> Graiis ingenium, Graiis dedit ore rotundo
> MUSA loqui,

his words seem to mark, not so much the characteristic quality of the Poets of that favoured region, as the general structure of periods, rounded with modulated and harmonious terminations. And the Os rotundum of the Orator, differs only in degree, from the Os magna sonaturum of the Poet. In the sphere of Eloquence therefore, those picturesque illustrations of argument that convey information, in its most pleasing form, the power of arresting attention, and of creating interest, by a display of certain circumstances, in the most fascinating arrangement; finally, all that melts the heart, and commands the affections; mark the alliance of Sister Arts, proceeding from a common original.

> ——Facies non omnibus una,
> Nec diversa tamen, qualem decet esse Sororum.——Ovid.

He therefore who is insensible to the power of a great imagination, exerted in its proper sphere, under the guidance, and with the co-operation of understanding; must be callous to every finer feeling of the human heart.

I have now finished my observations on the nature and use of Epic machinery: and the reader is about to peruse a work very different in kind from a critical essay. A man may be as bad a judge of his writings, in the character of an author, as he is of his children, in that of a Parent; and for the same reason, because he is partial in both cases to his own offspring. What I can therefore mention farther with propriety, respecting the following Poem, will lye within a very narrow compass.

Many years have elapsed since I formed the design of engaging in a poetical work of some length, when I should not be otherwise occupied. Hence, I was gradually led to adopt the subject of the following Poem, of which, as being adapted to the Epopœa, I have treated at some length. I was induced to carry it on by the pleasure that is the reward of perseverance. I considered it as the principal literary employment of my life: and the readers of the preceding Dissertation will, I hope, be satisfied, that with whatever measure of ability I may have executed so great an undertaking, I have not entered into it without some knowledge of its nature and purpose. I made no haste to finish it, because, as I was daily adding

new

new information to the little fund of which I had become master, I was solicitous to turn it to some account, in bringing forward a work, to which the embellishments of Art, and the subjects of Science, are equally congenial. This attempt I now offer to the Public with the utmost diffidence, under a title that is calculated to excite curiosity, and give scope to critical investigation. Whatever may be its fate, I shall always reflect with pleasure, on the many solitary hours that passed away while I was occupied in composing BRITANNIA, in an amusing and innocent gratification; which suspended the recollection of the past, and heightened the enjoyment of the present. Herein perhaps consists the principal advantage of poetical propensity. Under great calamities, it is indeed crushed, and overpowered: but under lesser ills, it can steal away the mind, at least during a season, from unpleasing remembrance; and tranquillise the agitated spirit, by consolations of which it is easier to feel, than to describe, the effect.

WHEN I inform the reader, that the Poem which he is about to peruse, has been read with approbation, in manuscript, by some of the best judges, and most eminent characters in the republic of letters; I mention this fact, not to prepossess him in its favour, which I am sensible would be an idle attempt; but merely to exculpate myself from the charge of temerity, or an improper degree of self-estimation. If indeed, it should be deemed not unworthy of the public regard, I shall ever consider myself as being principally indebted for this benefit, to the attention wherewith these gentlemen perused the work, and to their remarks, carried, as much with the warmth of friendship, as with the candour of impartial criticism, into every part of it. I will not offend their modesty, by mentioning names, which would do honour upon this occasion, to myself. But they will pardon the impulse by which I am led to give this public testimony of my acknowledgment.

THE author of BRITANNIA is now arrived at a time of life, when the objects that captivate young minds, lose in a great measure their fascinating qualities. Yet, far from being an indifferent spectator, on the present occasion, he will wait the decision of the Public with anxiety, and will receive it with respectful acquiescence. To the reader he would only observe, respecting the execution of the work, that, in a subject so comprehensive, as is that of an Epic Poem, there must be considerable variety; and where much variety obtains, he will probably meet with some entertainment.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK I.—

THE ARGUMENT.

THE Poem opens with some account of the antient inhabitants of ALBION, and of the face of the country.—The Guardian of the Island, at the time appointed for the arrival of BRUTUS, ascends the cliffs of DOVER, and sees his fleet sailing for the coast.—He arrives.—Catalogue of his forces.—The Guardian Power, assuming the appearance of a Shepherd, is brought before BRUTUS, whom She informs particularly of the manners, residence, and power of his enemies.—She disappears, after having given him some encouragement.—And BRUTUS, confiding in this, and in some other favourable circumstances, commands his ships to be burnt, and having encamped, determines to take possession of the Island.

THE Chief who to Britannia's shore convey'd
A train to conquest born, and sovereign rule,
The first great FATHERS of her race;—his fame
In arms, in wisdom; and the deeds that graced
His bold Compeers, whose spears opposed the force
Of barbarous hosts;—to conquer and reform,
To rule and civilise, at once their aim:

Themes; in the Briton's generous heart that wake
High thoughts, congenial to the free-born mind,
Swell now the long resounding chord.—The Muse
Lifts her rapt eye, and flings along the lyre
An hand that trembles, while it guides the strain.
THOU Power ethereal, by whatever name
Hail'd in celestial climes, by Heav'n ordain'd
To guard the seat of empire, to exalt,
O'er other lands, Britannia's envied Isle!
O! from the ragged cliff, whence thy wide ken
Oerlooks the world of waters, and surveys
Th' Atlantic's tributary waves; incline
Thine ear propitious!— When th' Eternal call'd
From night, this rude orb, with umbrageous woods
Oerspread, and roughen'd with the cloud-wrapt hill,
Thou saw'st the deep recoiling, as the cliffs
Of Albion tower'd amid th' investing main,
Sublimely eminent! Thou to the Sun
Beheldst her mountains flaming, and her vales
Teeming with copious pastures. But to rouze
Her sons to godlike deeds; to fix the reign
Of Science, Glory, Freedom, Wealth, and Right,
Amidst her better times, while yet the Queen
Of Nations flourish'd, in her great domain;
These were thy nobler tasks.—Indulgent, now
Attend! for, rising to her theme, the Spirit
Divine essays to bid her song resound

Down the long vale, where Time's evolving forms
Lie wrapt in dim futurity:—to Man
In ages yet unborn; by Thee inspir'd,
O'er climes remote she spreads her Country's fame.
UPBORNE by Thee, she darts her steady gaze
O'er periods lessening in extended range,
And through the shade that wraps the first of days
Beholds a Desert, where the busy throng
Now swarms. The monarch of the waste she eyes,
The wild wolf raging with the lust of prey,
Here, on his solitary walk; the wild
Now still, and to his hunger-prompted howl
Anon re-echoing. There a mightier race
She sees, surpassing Albion's native sons;
Gigantic shapes, that, in the bull's rough hide,
Or shagged vestments of the brouzing goat,
O'ershading ruthless hearts, and grasping fierce
Some oak's broad fragment, or unshapen mass
Of rude and knobbed ore; along the wood
Stride grim and horrible. Rouz'd by their tread
Wolves darting rapid to the cavern's mouth
Keen with the rage of hunger, and intent
To bear some morsel to their famish'd young;
Eyeing the grizzly savage as he moves,
Gnash their white tusks, and lashing in their rage
The rock, and howling, seek their inmost den.
ONE tribe she marks of men improved, and skill'd

In gentler arts that humanize the mind.
But these, expell'd their native seats, and placed
Far on the margin of the western main,
The Muse beholds, as erst the first of men,
Tending their flocks, that clothe the mountain's side;
Or in the mazes of the sunny vale
Rearing the golden fruitage, or reclined
On the green turf. A simple race! in arms,
When arms were needed, nor unskill'd, nor slow:
But short their bounds, and vain their utmost power.

Oft from the mountain's airy top they view'd
The giant tribes, as various labours fill'd
Their hours, now raising with their fellow-wolves
The uproar of the waste; or muttering spells
Unknown; or, through the dim and lurid air,
Spreading their loose locks, and uplifted hands
Wild to the moon's wan orb!—They saw, and shrunk
Back to the simple hut, and peaceful plain.

Pensive, along the solitary shore,
With slow sad step, the Guardian of the Isle
Travers'd the wilderness, as from her sons
She turn'd indignant: Of the choir, that stand,
In ceaseless watch, around th' Eternal's throne,
She of the prime, once minist'ring, preferr'd
An offering grateful as the first pure breath
Of morning sacrifice,—the Righteous' pray'r
To Heaven's great Father, who well pleased, beheld

Her love of human kind: hence, to her charge
He gave the first of Nations, long a haunt
Chearless and desolate, and long the seat
Of rude oppressors. At the hour of eve,
Oft from the fairy woodland, or the shade
Of flexile willows trembling o'er the stream,
Was heard the dying lute's melodious wail,
Wooing the pale-eyed Goddess, on her car
A while to listen. From the naked beach
Anon, that hung impending o'er the tide,
Oft on the ear of midnight deeply still'd,
She roll'd the maze of harmony:—Her song,
What time the mermaid o'er the swelling flood
Rear'd her white bosom, held her ear enthrall'd,
Her tresses floating on the surge, and charm'd
The lay that trill'd wide warbling o'er the main.
One thought in solitude's deep shade, upheld
Her mind, desponding else: She saw the day
Approaching near, by Heaven ordain'd, to free
From thrall the natives, by a foreign host,
From orient climes, beneath a Chief renown'd
That spread the sail for Albion: doom'd to crush
The tyrants of the land; and found a line
Whose fame should spread to earth's remotest bound.
While thus employ'd—the slow revolving years
Perform'd their course at last. She hailed elate
The promis'd hour, and felt the glad presage

Of transport warm her breast. With lighter heart
She eyed the wastes, and world-investing wave.
'Twas now the time when Spring's reviving breath
Scents every grove with fragrance. From the deep
Rose the gay Sun, rejoicing in his race,
And o'er the hills, illumined in his blaze,
And o'er the forest's wide extent, awaked
Nature's sweet choir, the children of the song;
And gave their throats, in many a melting lay,
To hail the genial Morn.—Amid a scene
Thus glad, when now beneath th' effulgent beam
Old Ocean flamed around, the Genius scaled
The Cliff, far-famed, to Gallia's hostile shore
Opposed, that far o'erlooks the flood below.
High on its summit stood the heavenly Power,
And gave her green robe to the gale, and stretch'd
Her wings expanded o'er th' abyss that flamed
With waving radiance as they moved: her front
A starry crown emblazed. The Muse beheld
The Shape celestial, veil'd from mortal ken,
She mark'd her port superiour, and her eyes
Far-beaming light ethereal, as the Sun
At morn, when peering from his cloud, illumes
The blushing orient: At her feet she saw
The trident lye; and in her hand, aloft
The sceptre raised, whose powerful touch controuls
Th' illimitable deeps. Sublime she tower'd,

And o'er the world of waters look'd abroad
In still suspence, and scann'd the void around.
Long o'er the space she turn'd her piercing eyes,
Sparkling with hope, and ardent to explore
What first occurr'd. But undulating air,
Or cormorant slow floating, as it seem'd
In shade half lost, while rising on the surge,
Bounded her wide survey.—At last a speck
Darken'd the blue horizon. By the winds
Borne onward, in advance it spread in view.
And now the white sail floating to the breeze
Stood eminent! and now the stately bark
Dashing the angry billows from her sides,
Tower'd o'er the watery waste. Anon the voice
Of long acclaim came murmuring on the wind,
And, full exposed, a mighty Fleet, replete
With joyful mariners, approach'd the shore.
To heaven the Guardian look'd elate, and dwelt
On future conquests, and unbounded reign.

STILL rose her transport, as in prospect near
Were seen the Fathers of the British line;
A generous people, hardy, daring, free,
By ills unbroke; advancing to the land
That ecchoing, hail'd the sovereigns of the main.

HIGH on the foremost ship, that brush'd the wave,
At hand, the Leader of the glorious host,
Known by his gesture, and th' expressive look,

That, while it awes, yet pleases; took his stand
On the tall prow. His limbs in shining mail
Were cased. His face, and ebon-tinctured hair
Stood full to sight displayed. Calm courage there
And ardour rein'd by wisdom, by the voice
Of cool experience, sat. A dauntless front
The Hero shew'd; yet, as he view'd the throng,
He seem'd the Father of a num'rous race,
Eyeing his happy family with joy,
And mixt affection; with the soul that fir'd
One face, delighted: there, with arms inured
To rough and warlike deeds, an honest scar
That graced his forehead, in one Soldier caught
Th' approving smile, and valour pleased in all.

WIDE o'er the lengthening shores, now near in sight,
Silent and peaceful as they seem'd, unmark'd
By human feet, great Brutus turn'd his eyes,
Plunged deep in serious thought. The sails unfurl'd,
And anchor, spoke the perils of the sea
Now past. The hindmost ships, advancing, form'd
A line, whose central point the Monarch's held.
Its pread, and darken'd in its range the shore.

MEANWHILE the Chiefs, obsequious to the call
Of Brutus, stood in close assembly round.
Still was the scene: when, pausing ere he spoke,
The Hero raised his eyes, and thus began:
'Ye brave companions of your Leader's toil,

'In many a peril tried! Ye deem at last
'Your trials nobly ended! Yonder land
'That, rising o'er the tempest-shaken deep,
'Seems its great Empress, if I judge aright,
'You call the Isle ordain'd by heaven to rest
'Your wearied virtue! Nor infirm, perhaps,
'Your hope. Yet, tutor'd in the rigid school
'Of stern Adversity, ye know to check
'Presumptuous joy; for anguish and despair
'Follow the dear indulgence, thus repaid
'Too well.—When from the Trojan coast we sail'd
'In voluntary exile, and thy Fane,
'Diana, spiring o'er Sicilia's groves,
'Led us with suppliant gesture to invoke
'Thy aid, all warm and eager to explore
'Our future destiny;—as, at thy shrine,
'The rites perform'd, I lay dissolving wild
'In heedless extasy;—Ye know, at last
'The adamantine statue nodded! shook
'The vault, as charged with whirlwinds! All the Power
'Rush'd on the Prophetess, who thus inspired,
'Announced an ISLE, amid the western main,
'Cast out on Nature's utmost verge, to bound
'The whelming ocean, as a soil prepared
'To shield us wandering, and reward our pain.
'Wealth, Fame, and Conquest, there the Gods ordain.
'(Such was the voice,) to crown each distant age.

'THUS spoke the heaven-inspired. But meet we here
'Th' expected Isle?—Another world it seems,
'Or looks a boundless Continent, stretched far
'Beyond the ken of vision. Yet my voice
'Dissuades not trial. Call th' all-seeing Gods
'To hear: be Heaven by sacrifice implored,
'Add vows united to the Sire supreme,
'Who guides the stranger on his way, to point
'Our course, here fixed, or steered to distant climes.'

SINCERE, though erring, were his words. The eye
Of Reason wandering o'er impervious shade,
Checquer'd with many a dim and distant orb,
Unaided, fails to mark th' Eternal ONE.
He, from the altar soil'd with mangled limbs,
Abhorrent turns; but from the heart receives
Breathing its honest vows, unstained and pure,
The best oblation. His impartial view,
To all extending, works the general weal.

BUT this unknown, the ready priests prepare
Two milk-white heifers, wreathing round their necks
The fillet's sacred cincture. By the shrine
They stand, as patient of the stroke. Their front
The fell axe cleaves: the pavement smokes with gore.
While yet life linger'd in its seat, the Chief
Lean'd o'er the victim, by his bands inclos'd;
And call'd the Father, and the Lord of all.

'HEAR, Thou Omnipotent, who on the brow

'Of cloudy Pelion sitt'st enthroned!—By Thee
'A Nation led thro' many a peril, hopes
'In this lone shore, by ocean's roomy bed
'Begirt, to find the promised empire, here
'To fix the seat of their extended reign.
'Yet, dubious of th' event, thy parent care
'We claim, the sign that marks thy sovereign will.
'If in thy sight, Eternal Sire, our vows
'Have found acceptance, bid thy sacred Bird
'The monarch of the feather'd tribe, descend,
'Charged with thy message, that our host by Thee
'Favour'd, may find their seat of Empire here,
'Or brave once more the tempest and the waves.'

WARM from the heart he spoke; and HE, whose glance
Explores its inmost counsels, whose wide ken
Amid the atoms on this little ball
Before him crumbling into earth; from sects
Of Christian, Pagan, Bramin, Turk, or Jew,
Singles the Worshipper sincere, and bends
Indulgent to his prayer—that God supreme
Heard, and benignant gave the sign desired.

WHILE yet th' impatient throng with ardour gazed
On Heaven's blue concave, lo! the feather'd King,
Sailing with spreading pinions on the wind,
In majesty of flight, just to the shore
Stoop'd down; then, towering, sought his native skies.
All look'd with joy, when, from the brake at once

A fleet doe sprung impetuous: on her track
A famish'd wolf, with keen eyes darting flame,
Hung imminent. Th' eccentric chace, involved
In many a long and various winding, held
The host in silence, wondering, till out-breathed
Prone dropt the victim prostrate on the strand,
Short panting: quiver'd on its utmost verge
The fleeting spark of life.—When lo! the Bird
Imperial, rapid from th' ethereal height
Shot down! The wild wolf, growling o'er his prey,
He gores with beak deep-rooted, where the skull
Joins to the sinewy neck. The talons plow
His sides. In agony and rage, he tears
The earth in vain. He sees the doe released,
Snatch'd, yet uninjured, from his grasp, and free,
Dart to her hills, rejoicing. Nor the King
Of feather'd people, o'er a foe subdued,
Indulged his ire; but on extended wings
Once more ascending, mix'd with fluid air.

Loud rose the peal of triumph, as he soar'd
High on the wind. The Chief, in mystic signs
Skill'd deeply, from the rescued prize presaged
A happy period, while the strife prolong'd
Spoke war, and toils, and slaughter; but his thought
Conceal'd the just surmise. The Guardian Power
Swell'd the long shout, redoubling as it roll'd
From cave to cave, and all the sounding shores

Afar re-echoed to the distant wild.

Now o'er the coast the mighty numbers pour;
Their godlike leader first:—tho' past the prime
Of life he seem'd, yet, in refulgent steel,
Firm as the Hero trode, his vigorous hand
Still grasp'd the faulchion. To the strand succeeds
His host innumerous; by the sovereign's care
Embattled, bearing massy shields, and arm'd
With pointed javelins to assail the foe.
Not more the starry train of Hesper seems
In number; not in light outshines the blaze
Of helms blue-flaming, and resplendent mail.

Pleased, on an host yet glorious from their toils,
The Monarch turn'd his sight. The dangers past
Raise, as they glide on Memory's busy thought,
The present transport. Such the fix'd delight
Of some bewilder'd traveller, who roams
Th' imagined waste at midnight, by the owl
Now scared, or shrinking from the blast, that bears
Dark mystic warnings trill'd on Fancy's ear!
Such joy he feels, when, trembling to the ray
Of young Aurora, stands his shelter'd hut
Deep in the wood; and from the well-known shade
His children rushing, clasp their happy sire.

Say, thou, whose hand hath to thy favour'd sons
Display'd the path to conquest, when the foe
Shrunk from their steady charge! Who from the wreck

Of Roman grandeur; where the Goddess lay
In secret pining, call'd the Power divine
Of Liberty abroad, wing'd her long flight
Afar, and throned her in Britannia's Isle!
Say thou, what troops beneath the high command
Of Brutus stood disposed; succinct declare
Their Chiefs, their countries, and their fame in arms,
Ere yet their actions stand rehearsed in song.

Beyond the rest, in number as in might,
Advanced the Trojan Warriours: ranged behind
Their Prince, they moved terrific; in their hands
The faulchion quiver'd, o'er their helmets danced
The martial plumage, and in splendent mail
They came prepared for fight. Stern in their van
Fierce Camber strode; tho' not in stature raised
Above his peers, yet dauntless courage swell'd
His breast, and vigour braced his sinewy limbs.
Great Brutus' youngest hope, Albanus near
Led to the field Larissa's warlike sons,
Skill'd to direct the javelin, and to wing
Th' unerring lance. The rich Arpasias here,
And there great Phorcas led their native bands—
A martial race, whose sires to Ilium's walls
Once came ill-destined; but their happier sons
With fates propitious trode the British shore.
All on the blooming warriour fix'd their view
With joy. His keen eye spoke a soul alive

To each fine feeling, tho' by thought inform'd,
Yet eager on the perilous front of war
To brave whate'er opposed. Beside him stood
Divine Evander, with his subject train,
Thine offspring, Lesbos! Him the sounding shores
Of Mitylenia heard, as from the harp
He call'd melodious notes; for heaven had tuned
His soul to harmony; and age, that clothed
His head with venerable silver, gave
The cool yet piercing thought that scanns the mind,
And words that breathe persuasion. To the fight
Three Chiefs beneath him led their hardy bands;
Octas and Epialtes, and the strength
Of tower-like Mnestheus in their front appear'd.
Practised they seem'd in every various art
Of war; to turn, surround, or break the foe.
Bright was the scaled mail that closed around
Each warriour's breast: a dagger on his left
Hung loose, prepared for closer fight; while bows
Or ready javelins gall'd the distant lines.
Thy plains, Lyrnessus, pour'd an host abroad;
Adrastus led them on—for strength renown'd,
And dexterous stratagem. In massy arms
They blazed terrific. Here Albinus stood
Fix'd as a rock; and Corybantes there
Shook in his hand the spear, while his fierce eye,
As shooting meteors, flash'd, portending war.

Beneath Evœnor's gentler rule disposed,
And lightly arm'd, a troop from Lydia came
To sea-girt Albion. By Cayster's banks
Their fathers stray'd, or caught the thymy gale
Breathed o'er the face of smooth Meander's stream:
A blameless race, yet feeble; targets wrought
Of wicker, slight, yet broad, and turn'd with ease,
From right to left they wielded; yet their hands
Scarce bent the tough yew, and their darts in air
Sung harmless. Ranged in equal bands they trode;
Those Choas led; and Lysias, by his plumes
Afar distinguish'd, and tiara's height,
O'er these assumed the rule. To Albion's plains
They came ill-fated! Thy destructive hand,
Leontia, by Romerus' voice impell'd,
Swept their weak legions from the field, as leaves
Borne on the whirlwind's wing. A braver train
Beneath the great Megistheus march'd to fight
From Lycia's clime, Sarpedon's generous race,
A god-like tribe, and noble as their sire.
What time the towers of Ilium rose in flame,
Her armies slaughter'd, her auxiliar bands
Dispersed, and widely scatter'd o'er the main,
The Lycians, steady in her cause, maintain'd
The war; and, from her walls at last expell'd,
Launch'd with Æneas on the stormy deep—
The sport of winds—till Latium's friendly ports

Received the wanderers; thence to Greece convey'd,
Their sons, still constant to his glorious line,
With god-like Brutus trode the British strand.
A steely casque, a cuirass, and a shield
Down from the shoulders spreading to the knee,
Each warlike Lycian bore; nor sought in mail
To wrap his manly form. All on their sides
Wore ready faulchions, while portended spears
Held back assailants, heedless of their sway.
Beneath their Prince Megistheus, moved to fight
Three Chiefs renown'd in arms: Phineas the bold,
And Amphius, seam'd with honourable scars,
And stern Olympius. Each before his troop,
Pleased, with rejoicing heart now press'd the land.
Ill-fated Dares, with a hardy few,
From rocky Melita advanced: but him,
Devoted victim to the wrath divine,
A foreign grave received. Onuphrius led
The band with poinards arm'd, and skill'd to strike
From slings, with dexterous hands, a distant aim,
Involving sudden in a stony shower
An host remote, for conflict unprepared.

Say next, imperial Queen, what Grecian names,
Their ancient hate forgot, now mingling swell'd
The Trojan host? From high Mycene came
A mighty race—Clitander led them on;
His port announced the Hero. By his side

Was seen the tall Androgenes, who match'd
In strength rude Vortiger, almost in size.
Him young Philanthes, smiling in the spring
Of life, attends. The lily and the rose
Met in his face, whose pleasing features glow'd
At once with life and beauty. His fine form
The Graces shaped; for swiftness in the race
Not less than native elegance renown'd.
Such was the youth, of every heart beloved:
For not to charms that please the gazer's eye
Had Nature's bounteous hand confined her care:
Rich was his mind with virtues: every grace
Arose spontaneous in the happy soil,
Improved by culture: for th' instructive song
Of Phineas oft had held thy rapid wave,
Wild Inachus, suspended, as it oped
The Fane of Science to his earliest pride,
His lov'd Philantes. Ah! unhappy Sire!
No voice had warn'd thee of his fate; no dream
Foretold that, in a barbarous land, thy hope
Should find an early and lamented tomb.
Next, from Eurotas' bank, a martial race;
The sons of Sparta came. The noble few
Follow'd Arimon to the field; a name
Unmatch'd in arms, and stedfast as a rock,
That braves the forked thunder. From the plains
Of famed Laconia, secret, yet secure;

He march'd a chosen cohort, and unseen
Pursued his course unmoved, till on the shore
Of gay Cassiope he staid; and mark'd
The host of Brutus, spreading o'er the strand.
Nor shall the Muse, in dark oblivion leave
Thy fame, Lysicles. From the osier'd vales
Where smooth Euripus gently winds, he led
A band renown'd, to Albion's stormy isle.
Mesias and Hippias to the war convey'd,
Beneath his rule, two numerous troops, expert
To wing the flying dart, or wield the spear.
LAST, but not meanest, of th' auxiliar host,
Thy sons, imperial Athens, trode the field,
Illustrious; great in number, as in power.
The laurel, with the humbler myrtle twined,
Shaded their dazzling helms. The silver mail
Hung lightly on their bosoms; and, display'd
On their broad ensigns, floating to the wind,
Stood Pallas, shaking, in her outstretch'd hand,
The Ægis of her Sire!—Before them moved
Their chief, Eugenius, of th' Aonian maids
Not less beloved, than by the power of war
Distinguish'd. Those conferr'd impassion'd words,
And all th' inchanting energy of song,
That steals, or strikes, or ravishes the heart,
Quick as the fire of heaven; while this bestow'd
Strength on his arm, and courage to atchieve

The deeds his thought devised. Pisander near,
For swiftness famed, and great Laodamas;
Cleanthes, skill'd to aim th' unerring dart,
Led on th' embattled warriors to the field.
Watchful, behind their spreading battle, tower'd
The race of Dardanus. In armour clad,
Scathed as it seem'd, and roughen'd o'er in fight,
And rising to the combat, bore in sight
Shafts iron-pointed, or portended spears,
While marching silent onwards: for, secure
Of victory, they eyed their godlike Chief,
Locrinus. O'er the formidable line
Of heroes, he, like Pelion's cloudy brow,
Lour'd dark: not less terrific to the foe,
Than to the wretch, by secret dread appall'd,
Its summit clothed in thunder. To a form
Divine, an eye with strong intelligence
Kindling, the mirrour of his thought; an hand
Of force resistless, and compacted limbs,
Pliant to every wish; indulgent heaven
Had added majesty of port, the glance
That, like the shaking of Medusa's hair,
Shot terrour to the heart; or, when serene,
Chaced, as the beam of orient morn, dismay.
Radiant, in shining mail, the Hero came,
Wielding a spear, not by another chief
Once to be rais'd in fight. The eagle form

Of Victory on his blue helmet blazed
Amid the combat, like the star of eve
O'er each inferior planet. Flamed his shield
Like Gorgon, withering human force. August
He trode, and in Herculean strength secure,
Oerlook'd the field, nor fear'd assailing hands.

NOR yet to power unmatch'd, had heaven denied
To join each gentler feeling. As he eyed
His loved Almeria, beauty's charms divine
Soothed his fierce soul to tenderness. The fair,
Thy boast, Circassia, o'er the female train
Shone with unrival'd lustre. Not the Queen
Of Love, superiour, in poetic song
Warm from the bowers of Paphos when she comes,
Robed by the Graces, and arrests thy hand,
Stern Mars, in fury madding; and to love
Subdues thine angry soul! The mortal maid
Thus smiled in native elegance. Her robe
Swell'd as she moved, luxuriant; and the gales
Gave o'er her snowy neck the raven locks
In luxury to wander: Innocence,
Yet mixed with conscious dignity, inform'd
Each act. Locrinus' heart confess'd their power.
Phrenor and Polybus, beneath the Chief,
Led each his troop, rejoicing, to the strand.

WHERE now proud Dover to the Gallic shore
Stands full exposed, with many a cultured field

Girt round; a champaign stretch'd along the coast
Afar. Descending gradual from the hill
The ground, then clothed in Nature's simple robe,
Led to the level space. A wood before,
Not far remote, yet by the spacious plain
From the bleak summit of the cliffs disjoin'd,
Bounded the view impervious, spreading wide
Into the inland regions as it seem'd
Unknown; the haunt of wolves, or savage men!

ALONG the smooth descent now stood disposed
In files, the long-extended bands, and blazed
In arms refulgent, to the orb of day,
Now verging from his height. The Princes brought
To form the thronging legions, and assign'd
To each its place. And lo! the tents prepared
To screen the mothers and their infants, rose!
There the warm couch received its aged guest,
Who, while he scann'd past labours, and beheld
The promised region, bade th' Olympian sire
Close his dim eyes in peace.—As from the roar
Of tempests settling, when the lake reflects
The willow's pendent umbrage, to the breeze
Yet quivering: o'er the nations, now released
From toil, such calm succeeds the clang of war.
Ceased was its noise, and tremulous on the gale,
Its last low murmur died in deep repose.

WHEN now the Guardian Power beheld around

The regulated camp, and at his place
The watchful centinel attending: veil'd
From mortal ken, she spread her airy wings
Abroad, and shooting rapid o'er the scene,
Sunk in the woodland's depth. The Power divine
There staying, for th' etherial shape assumed
A mortal semblance. O'er her shoulders flow'd
A length of auburn locks; and o'er her limbs
A garment with a circling zone descends.
She look'd a shepherd in the vernal bloom
Of life, whose flock had wander'd, while he slept
Amid the shade, at noon. The rural crook,
Circled with flowers and foliage, graced his hand.
Mild was his aspect, and his meek eye spoke
Of peace and innocence sincere: untaught
To fear he seem'd, and straying sought the field
Where lay the host intrench'd, prepared for war.
Where on the left the chequer'd landskip rose
Ascending easy to the Cliff, the bands
Of Athens held their place. Thence as the swain
Advanc'd, Pisander mark'd him, and elate
Bespoke in haste Eugenius:—'Seest thou, Prince,
'What stranger hither bends his course, emerged
'But instant from the woodland? By his mien
'Some villager he seems, not without end
'Sent by th' immortal powers, to guide our steps,
'Perhaps, or warn us of approaching foes.'

To him Eugenius—'Lay thine arms aside,
'And meet the youthful wanderer as a friend;
'With bland demeanour please, and hither bring
'Our guest uninjured.' To the Leader's voice
The Chief obsequious issued from the camp
Unarm'd, and careless as it seem'd. He met
The shepherd smiling, and with words of peace
Relieved his doubting thought; for prone he look'd
To hope, and ready to confide. The heart
Yet young, nor practised in the ways of man,
Is ever candid thus, and sooth'd with ease.

Nor less Eugenius, when Pisander brought
The youth, with joy received him, nor in words
Less mild address'd. The Power divine conceal'd
Deep in her breast the transport that it knew,
As o'er the warriour's tents she cast her eye,
And scann'd her glorious charge. Pleased with their talk
Th' unknown celestial seem'd, and prompt to tell
Whate'er she knew with freedom. Hence serene,
She follow'd where the Peers, in council met,
Plann'd in their sovereign's tent the future scenes.

To them th' Athenian Chief disclosed his tale:—
To them exulting, shew'd his guest. All eyed
The youth with wonder. On his form divine
They feast their sight: till Brutus, from his throne,
With winning gesture, thus sincere, began:

'Tell, stranger, whence thy lineage, if derived

'From mortal race; and what the happy land
'Blest with a son so beauteous; for thy brow
'Benignant speaks of peace: nor we, tho' thus
'In arms, would violate its sacred laws.
'What care the shepherd and his fleecy charge
'Claim from the guardians of the public weal,
'We know—and from th' oppressive hand of power
'Would give the tribe release, to lead their flocks
'Along the dales rejoicing. But from heaven
'Shouldst thou descend; for not to mortal man
'Such form pertains; indulgent then accept
'Our grateful offerings, and observant, tell
'What coast we tread, what nations hold their rule
'O'er these wide shores; their manners and their state
'Declare; what means to conquer, what avail
'To join in amity: and if we touch
'An isle, or roam some wide-extended land.'

He spoke: and dubious, marked the smiling youth
With fix'd attention. To her theme sublime
The Power now rising, ere she spoke, assumed
An high, yet free demeanour. In their sight
The swain seem'd growing, as he stood erect,
In height: and casting o'er th' assembled Chiefs
A piercing look, in graceful act, replied:

'Thou great Commander of a godlike race,
'And ye illustrious Chiefs! prepare to hear
'What truth imparts, that guides an artless tale.

'Not on this coast I breathe my native air;
'Far distant hence the region where mine eyes
'First saw the light. Yet o'er these forests long
'My steps have wander'd, nor unskill'd, my thought
'The land, the people, and the clime explored.
'KNOW then, an ISLAND holds your mighty host,
'ALBION its name: by Nature's hand supplied
'With all in reason's just demand, that tends
'To pleasure or to use. Her mountains clad
'In green, and teeming with exhaustless stores,
'Lure to their range the herds that roam at ease,
'And batten on their sides: Her vales with flowers
'O'erspread, and copious herbage, please at once
'The sight, and offer to the ready hand
'Spontaneous beauty ripening in the sun:
'Her streams that bear o'er many a varying scene
'Their treasures to the main, clothe in their course
'The smiling bank with verdure: O'er her plains
'Spacious and rich, the mould neglected yields
'Unbidden harvests, by no sickle reaped,
'And withering on the soil: Free in her woods
'The fleet stag ranges, and the bounding roe
'Darts finely-feeling from the breeze: Her groves
'Resound with music; and a temperate sun
'Matures her blushing fruit.— O blest of heaven!
'Beyond example blest! Did her fierce sons
'But know to use the meed by nature shower'd

'With such unsparing bounty.— But ye wait
'To know their race, their deeds, their power in arms.
'Hear then attentive what I speak sincere.
'This little world, by the surrounding seas
'As with a rampart girt, and placed afar,
'Like heaven's peculiar favourite, from the sword
'Of warring nations; with its waste of stores,
'A direful race possess, a giant tribe,
'In manners savage, as in form. They boast
'From Polypheme their mighty line derived,
'Of human force regardless. Their rude hands
'Against th' Eternal, impious as their sire,
'They lift in horrid war. Yet not in frame
'They match Sicilia's monster brood, nor mate
'Perhaps in effort; tho' transcending far
'Earth's common offspring, as in length of years
'They far surpass the kind. Gerontes rules
'The barbarous rout, by stature raised to power,
'And high pre-eminence. Time that subdues
'All might, has now impair'd the Tyrant's arm,
'But not his rage. Though cruel as the herd
'That roam the wilderness in quest of prey;
'In guile his kindred of the den surpass
'Their rival spoiler of mankind. To tear
'And to enjoy his victim, his fell heart
'Prompts him instinctive; cooler thoughts, the voice
'Of ire or headlong appetite repells.

'The bull's strong hide with skins of shagged goats
'Inlaid in triple rows, inclose his frame,
'Grim as the monarch strides; and in his hand
'He wields the fragment of a rifted oak,
'Wrench'd from its parent stock, knobbed and rough,
'And firm'd with plated iron. Next in place,
'In might superior far, Romerus stands,
'In his own thought a God; to man a form
'Exceeding human! Pride, and high disdain
'Of rival prowess swell his heart, that glows,
'Beneath the rude fence of investing hides,
'With nobler passions than his fierce compeers
'E'er felt; his soul by native virtue sway'd.
'A mace the giant rears of knotted ash,
'Emboss'd with brazen plates, an Albian's gift,
'Or shakes a truncheon, as he sweeps the field,
'In aspect terrible; yet honour guides
'His acts, and turns each purpose of his soul.
'Him to the fight Gerontes' youngest hope,
'Leontia follows; her protecting friend
'In nought resembling. By her sire inured
'To blood, she learnt to seek the shagged boar
'In his deep haunt, and goad him into rage,
'Or slaughtering bathe her horrid hands in blood;
'While inexperienced yet in deeds of war.
'Hence, like the prowling race she thirsts for prey;
'Nor void of guile to seize it, or of power

'To strike, she triumphs o'er the meaner foe,
'But shuns the mightier. On her shoulders hangs
'A bow; her hand alternate wields the mace,
'Or hurls the rock's rough fragments o'er the field.
'Around her thrown, an adder's speckled skin
'Girds hides of various forms, her boasted prize.

'SLY Vortiger succeeds; in fraudful arts
'Deep-versed, his thought by courage uninform'd
'Conceives dark schemes; and oft successful, holds
'Th' unwary in his toils. He wields an axe
'Fit for a powerful arm; yet trembling shuns
'The battle's perilous edge, save when the call
'Of dire necessity compells his stay.

'FOR martial prowess, as their mightiest Chief
'Renown'd, but by the nobler powers of mind
'Known from his fierce allies, Androgeus stands
'By all revered. A numerous tribe obey
'His rule, that, exiled from their native land,
'Roam the bleak summit of the western hills,
'And bid the hand of smiling culture clothe
'Their sides with verdure. He from slaughter saved
'The race,* who on his yielding heart impress'd
'The love of Virtue. Hence he holds his reign
'With these remote amid sequester'd shades,
'His people's father, as their judge. To fight,
'When danger calls, he comes in shining arms,
'Wielding the hero's sword; and rules the war.

* See B. 14.

'THOSE, Princes, are the chiefs whose sway controuls
'The meaner multitude, in tribes arranged
'Beneath their Leaders. They, as best beseems,
'From beasts that range the forest, or from trees,
'Nature's spontaneous offspring; or from rocks,
'Borrow their garments, and their arms. In these,
'Fit emblems of the mind, they rush to war,
'With ruthless hearts, and desolating sway.
'Their chests and limbs within the vesture spread
'Rough o'er each form, close woolly folds defend
'From arms, else fatal in the warriour's hand.
'NOT distant far, a winding river rolls
'Its tide from many a source, and seeks the main;
'Sturia its name. Along the broider'd bank,
'Their city rises like the mountain pine,
'Whose summit meets the clouds. A round it forms,
'Stretch'd on the hither side; though hamlets line
'The farther bank, but thin, and loosely spread.
'Trees, round the wide circumference disposed
'At equal distance, hold the space within
'Shelter'd from every wind. Between them shoots
'The pliant osier, with the woodbine twined,
'And willows flexile stem, a spreading fence,
'To sight impervious; shading while it guards
'The rustic fabrics. These on steady piles
'Are rear'd, by banks of solid earth secured;
'And by the furze that shades the desart, screen'd

'From rain or storms above. Inclosing all,
'A broad and hollow fosse arrests the view,
'From man secured, as from the ravenous foes,
'That nightly howl without, by rooted stakes,
'That, planted close around its inmost verge,
'As with a mound of rock, invest the whole.
'SUCH is their rude abode; Gerontium named,
'From their high Chief; not by themselves design'd,
'Nor rear'd. The natives of the land contrived
'The plan, and as Androgeus gave command,
'Perform'd the task. In savage nature, here
'The giant people live. O'er the broad trench,
'What time their business calls them to the field,
'They throw the rifted oak, or pass'd, remove
'Th' unwieldy bar, and rush into the wild.
'AFAR removed, Androgeus holds his rule
'O'er a free nation, polish'd and refined.
'Skill'd in mysterious rites, what time the moon
'Shews her pale crescent on th' ethereal vault,
'Dim through the shifting clouds;—beneath the oak
'They sit, or in the drear and hallow'd fane,
'The haunt of troubled ghosts; all watchful, see
'Andraste sailing through the lurid air,
'Dire shape! and poising (superstition thus
'Misleads the best,) the balance in her hand,
'Charged with the fate of empires. Nor in arms
'Unskill'd, they shake the javelin and the spear,

'Or whirl the car in fight. No foreign sires
'They own; but glory in a mighty name,
'The Albian race. Brave Segonax commands,
'Beneath Androgeus, their auxiliar hosts;
'All in their leader's cause prepared to die.
'SUCH are the powers, illustrious chiefs, that wait
'To match your legions. What ye wish to know
'Farther, if aught remains—with freedom speak.
'My ready voice shall answer each demand.'
THUS, while the Guardian spoke, th' assembled peers
Drank the celestial notes; for to her voice
She held their ears, as to the melting lyre,
Enthrall'd. They eyed the Shepherd in attire
So rude; in aspect, and in thought, divine!
At last the Leader, shunning each extreme
Of dread, or forward confidence, replied:—
'STRANGER! whate'er thy lineage, or thy name,
'We ask not more. What thou hast said, demands
'Our tributary thanks. I speak the thought
'Of each consenting heart. What yet remains
'Not fully known; propitious to our hope,
'Yet deign indulgent to declare!—What place
'In yonder forest holds the giant bands?
'Live they at hand, amid the woodland, spread
'So wide? and seek they, in their walk, the plain
'Our camp o'erlooks? Or do they roam remote
'Amid the wilderness, like beasts of prey,

'That haunt the midland wastes? These doubts removed,
'We know what conduct fits us, and what course
'Leads to the last retreat that guards the foe.'
HE said; and smiling, thus in few replied
The youth: 'Thy questions, Prince, bespeak a mind
'Cool and secure, that builds its last resolve
'On comprehensive knowledge, and omits
'Nought that can guide its counsel. Know, great Chief,
'Yon wood, in length extended far to view,
'In depth is yet unequal. What thou seest
'The river bounds; not distant, tho' conceal'd
'From sight. Where yonder elm o'ertops the trees,
'Thin as they seem, and to the left inclined,
'There stands their fortress, to the space opposed
'Hence opening on the sun. The savage race,
'Seeking the desart, or the cavern's depth,
'Print not their footsteps on the peaceful shore,
'Save when they hail the Father of their line,
'With rites but ill observed.—Be, as in times
'Elapsed, considerate, wary, brave, resign'd
'To heaven's Eternal in the turns of fate,
'Nor yet desponding meanly, nor with pride
'Exulting in the noon of prosperous change;
'Some Power divine perhaps may guide your course
'Through toils and perils to the wish'd repose."
He spoke; and instant in the viewless wind,
Dissolved. In silent wonder stood the throng

Aghast! while on the thin impassive air
They gazed amazement! Not th' enraptur'd seer
On Jordan's bank, beheld with keener eye
The fiery chariot rushing on the skies
Abroad; nor caught the mantle of his friend,
What time the seraph snatch'd him to the car,
More joyful. Bursting into words the first,
Eugenius claim'd their ear, and thus began.

'ALL hail, ye favour'd of the skies! ye Powers
'By Jove distinguish'd. Lo! th' Almighty walks
'Sublime before you! In the pomp of light
'I see the God descend! His right hand grasps
'The forked bolt, and Triumph in his van
'Blows the soul-rouzing trumpet!—Stay we here
'Deedless, when thus th' Eternal calls us forth
'Confess'd, to victory?—Haste, rouze the Camp;
'Stir all the spirit of the lagging bands;
'And, arm'd with torches, lead a cohort out
'To fire the ships: for lo! th' expected Isle,
'The promised land receives us!" Ardent thus
He said. To every heart the Queen divine
Gave animating flame. Yet on the King
They turn'd their eyes a moment, unresolved:
He, prompt to follow, where the powers of heaven
Assumed the lead, and eager to improve
The happy instant, gave assent; and all
Rush'd to the field rejoicing. Not a breath

Or querulous voice low murmuring urged delay.
In gold and amber now the setting sun
Wrapt his effulgent face, and on the verge
Of heav'n hung trembling; when around their chiefs
Convened by heralds, came th' innumerous host.
Deep silence held them, when great Brutus spoke
Of Jove assenting, and the Power conceal'd
In mortal guise, that here announced their reign;
And told what direful race possess'd the land,
Yet by their arms to fall. They heard, and swell'd
Acclaim. The Hero left a chosen band
To guard the camp: and, at his call, the host
Pour'd o'er the shores tumultuous.—Of their stores
Spoiling the ships, they piled along the strand
The magazine of wealth; then, in their sight,
Seizing a torch, the Monarch held aloft
The brand yet kindling.—'Herè the Gods decree
'Your seat of empire'—thus he said—'be now
'By them convey'd, in conquest and renown
'Your only hope!'—He said, and tossed in air
The flaming ensign. On the headmost ship
It fell. The crackling cordage caught the blaze,
Spreading from deck to deck. All gave the fire
A wider range, till in one general flame
The navy rose to heaven. The chiefs beheld
Unmoved the ravage; and exulting, hail'd
The shores long sought, now deemed their native land.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK II.—

THE ARGUMENT.

AZRAEL, the Demon, who had been commissioned by SATAN to prevent BRUTUS from arriving in ALBION, returns to the infernal mansions, disappointed.—In answer to the demand of SATAN, by what means this event had fallen out, he relates the preceding history of BRUTUS.—Touching on the first occurrences of his life, and on his adventures in ITALY and GREECE; he mentions more particularly his last voyage to SICILY, where the place of his future destiny was to be announced by the Oracle.—In order to stop his course, AZRAEL relates an account of the storm he had raised, by calling up the Demons of the Earth; and the opposition that was made to them by UZZIEL, the Angel of the Ocean.—Having failed in his purpose of destroying the fleet of BRUTUS, he says, that he had succeeded in altering the place of its destination: and while the attention of UZZIEL was called off by the ruin which the Demons of the Earth spread over all parts of the ocean; he relates the means by which he had brought them to land on the Island of CYTHERA, one of the CYCLADES; by the luxury and effeminacy of whose inhabitants, he hoped, they would be effectually enervated, and prevented from proceeding on their voyage.

NOW ceased the tumult of the toil-worn throng,
Stretch'd in the camp at rest. Oblivion held
Behind her mantle, all the past conceal'd;

And gave from anxious doubt, suspense, and fear,
A short, but sweet release. Alone the guard,
That wakeful paced in solitary round;
Heard but the murmur of the main, by winds
Unvex'd; or from the wilds, the distant howl
That spoke the tenants of the waste, retired
Far in the depth of woodlands, with their prey.

But not the chains of slumber had enthrall'd
The watchful Enemy of God. The Fiend
Roll'd schemes unceasing in his troubled thought,
Against th' Omnipotent; and as the past
Smote his recoiling memory, revenge
Was stirr'd within him. Unrelenting rage
By disappointment edged, and deep dismay;
The thirst of vengeance, as with inward fire
Glowing, yet never to be sated; these,
The curse of pride degraded, and of power
Cast from its height, to darkness and despair,
Struck anguish to his thought, inscrutable
By man; and felt but in th' abyss below.

Far o'er the sulphurous lakes that ever bear
Blue flames, arising from the fuel'd soil
Beneath; oblivious Lethe slowly winds
His tide in silence onwards.—On its bank
Glimmer the flitting lights that in the stream
Shine dim, and mournful; glides the sleepy wave,
Stirr'd by no breath, save when remote, the wail

Of Spirits pent within the gulph of fire,
Comes lingering e'er the waste. Thither their King
From the wild uproar of th' inferior crew,
Gloomy, and desolate of heart, retired.
Around he cast his eyes, forlorn and drear;
But all was desert in the vault, and wild,
For hell abhorr'd the haunt. One Fiend he mark'd
Alone; essaying oft with eager lips
To taste th' eluding moisture: still in hope,
He lost in sweet forgetfulness the past,
In one soul-healing draught: but as he plunged,
The channel met him; and the nitred floor,
Mocking his vain attempt. With anguish gazed
The fallen Archangel. From his inmost soul
He sigh'd, and pausing, thus unheard, began.

" O that the mind in this benumbing tide
Could lose remembrance! for reflection smites
This breast more fiercely than the thunderbolt
That tore my battle, hurl'd me to the lake
Of fire; and trench'd with many a gaping wound
This frame, extended on the gulph.—Am I
The only mark at which th' Eternal wastes
The quiver of his wrath?—Ah, lost beyond
All hope! Demands not then perpetual sin
Perpetual punishment? O! Thou, the Lord
Of heav'n, who wakest to one infuriate blaze
These flames; let loose thy thunders, lift thine arm,

And crush me into nothing, if such power
Be thine! for, conscious that each blasted scheme
Has sunk me deeper into night; my thought
Aims to destroy thy kingdom! On revenge
Alone intent, even now a gleam of joy
Athwart the darkness shoots, as I behold
Thy favoured sons, so late who held their course
Direct to Albion, with propitious gales,
Whelm'd in the deep for ever, with their hopes
Of boundless empire, conquest, and renown."

He said, and o'er his front so deeply scarr'd
Dim Hope a moment glanced, and gloomy joy;
Soon lost: For from th' abyss unwonted sounds
Of uproar reach'd his ear. Along the void
He heard the Seraphim resound his name
Nearer; and thro' the fiery region, saw
Their pinions floating on the dark. As he,
Who o'er the wastes of Lybia holds his way
Cheerless and desolate; nor at the hour
Of midnight to his toil-enfeebled limbs
Finds other shelter than the burning sands,
Or rock afford him; as he sinks to rest,
Hears the whole waste with one collected roar
Resounding long, and loud: thus heard the Fiend
Surprised, yet dreadless. Spreading on the winds
His broad wings; in their flight that bore the sound
Of troubled oceans; Hell, thro' all her deeps

Announced her King's approach. He look'd at once
The din to silence, and assumed his throne,
Unalter'd in his state, as one who views,
Fix'd in himself, all ills with equal eye.

TH' inferior Spirits left at large, a few
Convened before him in the dark recess
Of his imperial mansion; all intent
To know their Leader's thoughts, and hear his law.

AROUND th' assembled peers he cast his view
Severe, when Azrael met his sight, and shew'd
At once the cause of tumult. As in fight
He seem'd discomfited. His front was gash'd
With scars unseemly; rent his hanging wings,
His hair dishevell'd, and his loose eye reel'd
Aghast; while, ever and anon, the pit
Gleam'd to the flash of lightning, and recoil'd
From heaven's Eternal, speaking thro' its void
In thunder to the throng! That dreadful voice
Alone, th' Archangel heard, not unappall'd.

WHEN now the tempest ceased its voice, and hell
Resumed its wonted face; before the throne
They brought the vanquish'd seraph, from his dread
Released, and by his wounds afflicted less;
So soon th' ethereal frame repairs its waste,
Though suffering. Ire unsated, as he came,
Not shame depress'd him. On the soil he bent
Askance his conscious eyes; when frowning stern,

Thus spoke the foe profess'd of God, and man.

"Com'st thou, weak fiend, to these forlorn abodes,
Thus maim'd and terrour-struck? Is thus thy boast
Fulfill'd, to bury in th' unfathom'd deep
The warriour and his host, decreed by heaven
To circumscribe my power; perhaps to shake,
Or raze mine empire, o'er the sons of Earth
So dearly bought? Not uninform'd thou went'st
On thy great errand, nor unskill'd to know
Its import, and its end.— Through the deep shade
That veils the future, as I cast mine eye,
Weighing with anxious thought the sum of things;
Know, Princes of the Deep, a hero stood
Before me, of the famed Enean line,
Splendent in arms! I saw his father's blood
Smoke on his sword, and knew each parent doom'd
By him, though guiltless in th' intent, to fall.
Him with an host of warriours I beheld
Launch'd on the main, and to the fated isle
Of Albion, yet beneath Gerontes' rule,
Holding his course direct; there Prophecy
Speaks of a pure religion, and a race
Enlighten'd, free, imperial, foes profess'd
To superstitious rites; ordain'd to spread
O'er our own world, where human victims stain
Our sacred altars with their blood—the light
Of knowledge, and of truth. I saw the Prince,

Perhaps the sire of this destructive brood,
Raised in a distant age; and gave command
To watch with care the Anchisean chiefs,
Successive as they rose, and to declare
What time the deeds by one ill-fated hand
Perform'd, should place The Man in open view
Thus mark'd; and, if I read aright the Fates,
Thus destined. Now the Thunderer speaks his will.
"AZURIEL, watchful o'er his charge, beheld
Revolving ages mixing with the dust
These earth-born reptiles; but announced at last
In BRUTUS, all the prophecy fulfill'd.
His birth the mother's instant fate procured:
She sunk; and erring in its aim, his dart
Transfix'd his father's heart. Events so dire
Drove him, though guiltless, from his native land.
He raised an host, for great his fame in arms,
And high in wisdom stands his name; to seek
Some foreign region. Thee I gave in charge
To hold him wandering from th' appointed Isle.
Now years on years elapsed, to me thou comest
Maim'd and mishapen. On thy visage lours
Despair. But tell thine errand, and omit
In thy detail, no circumstance that leads
To information. Speak thy thoughts at large
Alike of human, and celestial things,
With freedom unrestrain'd; that I may judge

From all, what conduct best befits the time."

HERE ceased indignant the superior Fiend,
With anguish at his heart; while on his brow
Sat fix'd resentment scowling, and disdain.
Silence, amid the still assembly, waved
Her life-benumbing wand; when now abash'd
And awed, the Demon told his direful tale.

"PRINCE of the boundless air, and ye who hold
High rule, unyielding to the Lord of heaven;
Attend impartial what my voice recites!
Know, not thro' me, have yon presumptuous reach'd
The port long-sought; but He who rules the skies,
Withstood my utmost prowess, mock'd my schemes,
And launch'd his arrows at my head. That long
I bore th' unequal fight, these wounds deep-trench'd
Can witness: witness, thou Uzziel, met
In equal battle in the mid-way air,
And sent affrighted, marr'd, and disarray'd,
Back to heaven's servile minstrels! But what frame
Can stand the dreadful thunderbolt, that son
Of fire, that never since these fuel'd lakes
First felt me rolling on the flaming wave,
Hurl'd such destruction on me? From its power
I turn'd; but left thy foes to curse the hand
That wrought them many a woe. But hear the whole:
Then as your judgment leads, acquit, or blame.

"CHARGED with thy secret mandate, to divert,

By force or guile, from Albion's distant shore
The fleet of Brutus;—to the climes of day
I held my course: and on the Latian coast
Alighting, found the Trojan Chief, then warm
In youth, collecting o'er the land, an host
To search, and to possess some track unknown.
To Greece the wanderer took his way, prepared
There to augment his powers with warlike bands,
For valour far renown'd. There once I deem'd
His seat of sovereign rule securely fix'd;
What time the yielding monarch to his suit
Consign'd Pandrasia; by my arts induced
To gain his friendship, and reward his toils.
"Long years elapsing in luxurious ease,
He saw his progeny arising slow
To manhood. Locrine, even in early youth,
Appear'd the matchless warriour; haughty, fierce,
And highly emulous of a hero's fame.
Camber, impetuous, hardy, bold, aspired
To every glorious deed; and burn'd to try
His strength in arms; while Alban, gentle, mild,
Yet bore a dauntless heart, and if I judge
Aright, an arm, even with the first to vie
In fight, when time shall call its vigour forth.
These chiding the dull hours, impatient, call'd
Their sire abroad, and in his soul awaked
The embers of ambition. In despite

Of auguries, dreams, and divinations, hatch'd
By me to thwart his purpose; he obtain'd
At last from Pandrasus a fleet; and soon,
Lured by his fame for wisdom as for power,
Greece pour'd from every clime her numbers forth,
To join his native bands; bands, by his care,
Amid this interval of rest, improved
In all that mortals deem their trade of war.
"BRUTUS, ere yet he launch'd amid the waves,
Invoked by pray'r his Gods, and sought the shrine
Where Arimaspes, deem'd a Power of heav'n,
By these, presaged the future, or appear'd
Thus to presage. That hour, by high command,
Stern Abdiel drove the Demon from his fane
Imperious; and announced th' Eternal's will,
That bade them instant seek Sicilia's shore;
There to be taught, what region was decreed
Their seat of empire, spread o'er many a land.
"CONFIDING in the word divine, the Chief
Explored the watery waste, and brought an host,
In number as the myriads that o'erspread
These else forlorn abodes.—What arts I tried
To blast their purpose, not employ'd in vain;
How cloudy pliant, I assumed all forms,
And practised every mean to lead their search
Astray, thou know'st, great Leader; and what deeds
The Trojan Prince atchieved, far as he deem'd,

Now chased by foes, and now by adverse winds
Driv'n from his aim, the wish'd Trinacrian plains.
Thou know'st how near he touch'd the dreaded Isle,
When Gaul received him wandering, and what Chiefs
There fell beneath his arm. As yet by guile
I wrought; for force I deem'd my last resort.
From scenes thus known, I pass to other themes
Of import high, that claim thy heedful ear.

" I saw the navy loosed from Gallia's shores,
And borne by favouring winds along the deep;
Coasting in pride the Lusitanian land.
I saw them pass th' Herculean streights, and, swept
By Ophiusa, and the wood-crown'd hills
Of Balearean Isles; approach at last,
Beneath Uzziel's guidance, to thy coast
Sicilia, there to hear the voice divine;
And thence, protected by that Seraph's power,
To reach secure the fated Albian Isle.

" Such was the time that call'd for instant deeds;
I mused a moment, and devised at last
A dire expedient, suited to the time
Just ripe; when other means had nought avail'd.

" Ye know while some of our immortal kind
Smit with the love of novelty, pursued
In earth's first days, the nymphs of human race
In mortal forms: some mix'd with earth-born sprites,
Then first created, when heav'n's King call'd forth

Earth's rugged mass from chaos, and ordain'd
To hold its forests, rivers, lakes, in charge;
Amphibious race, half human, half our own!
With these, in woodlands caught, or deeply sunk
In caves, or wailing near the reedy stream;
Satyrs, and Sea-nymphs, Dryads, Genii, forms
To ours unlike; we got a crew abhorr'd,
Unshaped, and monstrous; by the loathing earth
Cast out, or spawn'd on some malignant stream;
Hence call'd the Demons of the Earth. Like us,
They love what mortals deem disastrous scenes;
But not, like us, direct their acts alone
Against the Lord of Heav'n: Ruin and death
They bring, unheedful of superiour powers
Though leagued; nor conscious of reward or blame.

"These tribes, by some forgotten, and by all
In this dire region shunn'd; th' occasion brought
Now to remembrance, as I first conven'd
The band, and saw them in full concourse join'd.

"Resolved to rouze the monster-brood, I sprung
Light on the flying winds, and call'd them forth:
From each dank cavern, from each rifted rock
That wrecks th' ill-fated mariner; from gulphs
Where Furies howl their orgies; from the den
Abhorr'd of night, where tyger never yell'd,
I call'd; and, rouzed by words of potency
To break the sleep of death, around me throng'd

A crew with horror seen, beyond whate'er
Rapt fancy feign'd of Hydra, or the pests
That froze the pale-eyed gazer into stone;
Or even the shades, that o'er these livid lakes
Glide dim, and hold hell in amaze!— Of frame
And aspect various: some like Gorgon stood,
With wreathed locks tangled with snakes, and eyes
That scatter'd lightning. Some in stature reach'd
The clouds, and tossed as they came, their brands
Drench'd deep in Etna's glowing surge. On wings
Of dragon form, some on the pillar'd flame
Ascended. Darkness in their rear o'erspread
The void horizon; and an orb of fire
Roll'd, like Orion shaking o'er the earth
His horrid tresses, in their front. On me
They gazed, while yet amazement lock'd my tongue.
When from the concourse that inclosed me round,
One monster-shape advanced, and thus began.

'HASTE, Fiend accursed! impart, what secret cause
'Thus prompts thee from their gloomy haunts, to call
'This night-born race to day's detested glare.
'Not we the offspring of the skies, as thou,
'And thy compeers. But nature at our birth
'Shrunk as affrighted back. Our vengeful line
'From you derives its source; but of your race
'Regardless, nor to aught but ruinous acts
'Bending our thoughts; 'tis ours in nameless deeds

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'To deal; to bloat yon hated sun, or turn
'The livid moon to blood; What time the orbs
'Of heav'n, imbibing steams that taint the air,
'Shoot plagues; 'tis ours to catch th' envenom'd drops
'And brooding o'er them, as the sick earth feels
'The seeds of death, we mark with joy, the hour
'That sees the monuments of mortal pride
'Whelm'd in eternal dark. Even Thee we hate,
'And thy fierce King; nor had his throne escaped
'Our rage, but that like us, he roams the earth
'Intent on ruin.—Be some direful task
'Enjoin'd; else these, impatient as thou seest,
'Will scatter plagues upon thee; stretch thy limbs
'On the contending elements; or quench
'In fires thy being; or immure thee deep
'Beneath voracious Phlegeton, to howl
'Thy fate an age in madness, and despair."

"HERE ceased the Shape; and all with blasting eyes
Horrific, glared impatience. Soon as thought
Return'd, I cast with welcome words to chear
Their hearts, and, eager as they press'd around,
At last with winning voice serene, replied.

'YE spirits of the earth, who prompt, obey
The high behests of hell's superior Lord;
To you the father of your vengeful line
Sends gratulation; anxious still to please
Your race beloved, by me our Leader claims

'Your aid to work his great, and just revenge.
'YE know that Island, where our stedfast friend
'Gerontes holds his rule. Ye know the tribe
'Prone to the deeds which your resentful minds
'Conceive.—Say, Spirits, can ye tamely lose
'Friends thus approved, and tried?—Know the strong Lord
'Of Thunders meditates their fall. Even now
'An abject crew, in his expected aid
'Alone confiding, seek Sicilia's shore:
'Thence shall they reach the fated Albian Isle,
'If we prevent not.—Thus th' Eternal wills.
'Their course Uzziel guides, th' angelic Power
'Who rules the watery element. I heard
'When parting, thunder rolling on the left,
'The pledge of pray'r accepted. To oppose
'Such force, this single hand, tho' known in arms,
'Yet boasts not strength. My hope of conquest rests
'On your prevailing aid. A Trojan Chief,
'Brutus his name, commands their numerous host,
'Swell'd with presumptuous joy. 'Tis yours to quell
'Their pride. Then from the dank, and tainted fen
'Wasting the springs of life; from vaults beneath,
'Where prison'd deep, th' impetuous tempest shakes
'The heaving mass; from dungeons where the keen
'And killing blast is pent, that never yet
'Swept o'er earth's desolated face;—from these
'Call forth the warring elements; collect

'The atmosphere of clouds from every wind;
'And riding in the dreadful uproar, strike
'To their weak hearts, despair. Whelm in the deep,
'While yet their idle hands are raised to heaven,
'Their fleet with all its freight, to rise no more.
'YET mark my words observant: should the Lord
'Of heav'n forbid their ruin, and prepare
'Some coast to shield them, and receive; be yours
'The task to keep Uzziel from the shore.
'Range, then, with daring and impetuous wing
'The sea's unmeasured waste; and hold employ'd
'His thoughts, while I by other means essay
'To turn their purpose from the destined aim."

"YE heard, imperial Powers, on that dread day
When Heav'n's Eternal to the formless void
Gave shape, and cast amid the waste of air
Yon globe illumined wide;—ye heard the yell
Of antient Night, when on her throne the ray
Flash'd sudden. Hell's immeasurable void
Reechoed to the roar. A voice so dire
From this misshapen brood announced acclaim:
Ascending o'er them on th' aerial vault,
Sure of observance, I pursued my course,
To view the victims doom'd to sate mine ire.

"ERE this the ships, fann'd by propitious gales,
Had pass'd Sardinia's shores, and held in sight
The land, now first with joyful hearts beheld:

Each as beseem'd him spent the festive hour,
In song or sportful glee: some plied their oars,
Sweeping with equal strokes the parting tide,
Exulting. Some reclining o'er the waves,
Waked the melodious lute to airs divine,
That breathed of paradise; sweet airs!—Yet harsh
To me, distasteful as this tale;—for such
I heard in heaven. In social converse, some
Beguiled the moments; of Elysian climes
They talk'd, and saw thy shores, Hesperia, spread
At hand, disclosing prospects ever new.

"In pastime thus, and sport, the laughing hours
Swimm'd lightly on; nor dream'd Uzziel aught,
High as he floated on the gale, of ill.
When lo! The skies grew black! and in the west
I saw the Demons scourging as they came,
The lagging whirlwind! O'er the vast of air,
When first beheld, they seem'd like clouds that wrap
In night the boundless firmament, impregn'd
With storms;—but in their course the Fiends assumed
Their native forms; and gathering all the winds,
Met in the west; then closing, heap'd at once
The mountain billows in their front. I join'd
The crew; their mate in aspect, as in deeds,
What time on Brutus' fleet they rush'd amain.

"Nor the strong blast that swells this sea of fire
More fiercely rages, when the Thunderer spreads

O'er all one general flame, than now the winds
That, bursting on th' astonish'd throng, assail'd
And shook their feeble bulwarks. Sounds of woe,
And sights of horror froze them: here, the shriek
Of numbers hanging o'er the surge, aghast,
Eyeing the void beneath, their instant tomb
In thought! There, clinging to the mast, was seen
The panting mariner, with eyes erect
In vain imploring heaven, nor seizing once
The helm to guide his course; while mid' the war
Of winds tremendous, thro' the darkness gleam'd
The fiery forms, and bade the tempest roar.
"Uzziel marking our destructive course,
Yet from the fight abstain'd; withheld perhaps
By dread; or staying till th' inferiour Powers
Convened; collecting all their strength to meet
Foes thus terrific. While he paused, we left
Sicilia's woods behind. I fear'd to wreck
The ships, tho' near, on that inviting shore,
Lest heaven should shield them in the ports they sought
Or leaving others to their fate, preserve
Their Chief to work new woes. Hence I assumed
The lead, and swept them o'er th' Ionian sea,
Heedful, amid the Isles profusely thrown
Around, to whelm their force in night profound.
"We saw Zacynthus and the Strophades,
Wing'd as with lightning-speed the vessels flew:

And now Messina's rocky coast appear'd,
The gulph wide-opening, and Tenarian point
Projecting far amid the deep. I mark'd
Uzziel now prepared for instant war,
And dashing on the rocks the headmost ships,
They burst!—The shriek was heard, the sudden scream
Of helpless woe, and struggling, o'er the flood
Their crews were scatter'd, night around them spread,
And roar'd the tempest with unceasing rage.

" JUST then that Angel, as ye know, in power,
And office highly raised, look'd thro' the cloud
Flashing ethereal light. To man he seem'd
The sun in splendour, breaking from the veil
Of clouds disparted. Bent on deeds alone
He lighted rapid on the wave, and held
Sidelong the sword that at his will disturbs
Or stills the broad deep, in the Demons' front,
Checking their headlong course. His servile bands,
While thus the leader bade the war surcease
A moment; wafted to the neighbouring shore,
Loose shatter'd hulks that floated on the surge
Snatch'd from impending fate; with crews aghast,
And trembling at the death so nearly shunn'd.

" 'TWERE vain to tell what battle on the flood
Now raved; how those insensate (not as we
Once foil'd in combat), held alive the war,
Nor how they rush'd terrific on the wing

Of meeting elements; check'd, not subdued
By Powers celestial, leagued in phalanx firm
Even in the last extreme: Such rage they knew.
" While yet the Demons thus advanced, I led
The fight, unknown. I saw th' attempt was vain
To sink them in the deep; nor wish'd to rouze
The Thunderer's ire, while uncompell'd, and free.
A surer course remained; to hold the throng
Remote from Albion, and at last to whelm
In final ruin. My presageful thought
Had laid the closer scheme; (for still I fear'd
Th' event of war;) and sought effectual means
To gain my purpose. Powers averse have turn'd
These from their distant aim. But hear what plan
I wrought, how follow'd, and at last o'erthrown.
" Ye know that Isle amid th' Ionian main,
That sees the Cretan and Laconian shores
Not far removed, replete with all that yields
Pleasure to mortal sense, Cythera named.
'Tis deem'd beloved of Venus, by the sons
Of earth; and as the happy land revered
Where, first they feign'd, that breathing from the deep
The Goddess sought retreat, eyeing the scenes
Around with wonder. Few from our abodes
Frequent this coast, where Asmodeus reigns,
By mortals worshipp'd as the Cyprian Queen,
In all the luxury of ease. A race,

Soft and effeminate, possess the soil,
Tutor'd to raise voluptuous thought, and wake
The embers of untamed and loose desire,
By smiles and dalliance, and bewitching arts,
That lure th' unpractised heart. Thither I hoped
To bring the Trojan warriours, from the storm
Escaped, and to assail with mightier foes
Than those that rode the whirlwind, and the flame.

"HENCE Asmodeus knew, by me apprized,
What wiles to practise if they touch'd the Isle
To him committed; and to steal their thought
From arms, to other deeds of gentler kind.
When now Uzziel with his band had stay'd
Our bold career, and half repell'd the crew,
Yet unsubdued; I saw the ship, that bore
The Trojan, turning the projecting point
To Tenarum, whence stood disclosed to sight
The Cytherean land.—Intent, I gave
Command, that these should spread along the waves,
Marking their course with ruin. At the word
They turn'd abrupt, and scattering o'er the waste,
The storm subsided as they left the land.

"UNSEEN, I heightened then in Brutus' eye
The scene that open'd to his view: He scann'd
The port, the waving woodland, and the throng
That lining all the strand, call'd, as it seem'd,
His ships to enter; with a heart awake

To joy, he staid his course, and now beheld
(While sighing, from the happier fields he turn'd,
To view the waste behind, then first disclosed)
Prospects emerging slowly from the dark,
The promontory's breadth, and fleet dispersed,
With cordage flying loose, and sails that shook,
In shivers torn. A vessel here appear'd
Row'd by the toiling mariners, and held
With pain, and by the power of all combined,
Her masts and rudder gone; above the waves
And ever as he gazed with anxious eyes,
New marks of ruin met his sight; the wreck
Of ships, by us o'erturn'd within the bay
Came round the head-land, on the rude rock dash'd;
Dread sight, with sighs beheld, and deep dismay.
"SUCH was the scene behind.—Before, the land,
Mantled in living green, with flowers that bloom
For ever new, lay smiling. Gladness here,
And there confusion reign'd. The Trojan Chief,
Not less assiduous than our busy race,
When in the act of warm devotion, near
Th' unguarded heart we whisper thoughts of ill;
Though bent on other deeds, bestow'd on all
Just care.—His pilot, while the storm prevail'd,
Not without aid celestial, steer'd his course
Sea-ward, and pass'd the dangerous shores secure.
The Leader's vessel hence, tho' scathed, remain'd

Least by the tempest shaken; and the crew
Were strong to act whate'er the Chief required.

"THUS placed, the Monarch left untried no mean
To bring the remnant of the fleet around,
And lodge them in the port. The nearest felt
His aid. To those remote, his signals shew'd
What point he wish'd to reach. Mean time he call'd
Aside a chosen friend. 'Go,' thus he said,
'And learn what race possess yon peaceful land,
'That seems with sweetly-varied scenes, the haunt
'Of old Sylvanus:—if thou seest them prone
'To save th' unhappy, urge immediate help,
'And hither bear some messenger of peace,
'The pledge of upright thought.'—All stood disposed
To please the stranger in that blissful isle:
Light skiffs with willing rowers seem'd prepar'd,
With sails wide spread, to bring th' expected aid.
He saw them parting from the coast; he saw
His friend returning with exulting heart,
The natives shouting, joyous as they came
To meet their welcome guests: he heard their voice
Plausive and glad, that call'd him to the shore;
Hence weighing all in thought, he gave command
In one compacted line to form the ships,
Yet spread in wide disorder; and convey
The toil-worn wanderers to Cythera's strand.

"IN one great aim thus failing, yet by fraud

I gain'd a purpose, (as I deem'd) secure,
Nor less effectual in th' event, though means
Of slow but powerful influence wrought its end.
I saw the vessels gradual as they came
Arranged, and borne in triumph to a coast
Teeming with plenty, as it seem'd; and throng'd
With hands employ'd to serve them, and insnare.
" MEANTIME a region to th' experienc'd eye
Familiar else, assumed by my command
A foreign aspect; and the Chief beheld
The groves beloved of Venus, and the bowers
Sacred to pleasure, and voluptuous ease,
Scenes that alarm the wise; yet unapprised
Of all that else had warn'd him of the guile.
" YET, not the Trojan nor his host had felt
My power, subjected to my sovereign sway;
But that the Demons, madding o'er the deep,
Call'd from the scene Uzziel, deeming now
One danger past, who turn'd to quell their rage.
" FAR other shout than even our legions raise
The race of darkness swell'd. Their voice was heard
Wild as the shriek of spirits when arrived
From earth, they see th' assembled bands of hell
That brandish fiery scourges, as they close
Around the helpless victims, to chastise
Their disobedience; and enraged, impel
Their steps reluctant to the pit!—To drive

The shapes once rouzed and furious to the dens
They left, and bar them from the face of day;
To still the troubled ocean, and repair
Whate'er of havock mark'd their dire career;
These to Uzziel and his train, opposed
A perilous task, not soon to be atchieved,
Nor but with toil.— To him I left the work,
And careful held one destined end in view.

"Thus, Princes of the deep! my faithful tongue
(The Fiend thus spoke;) half its portentous tale
Has closed. These wounds, yet ill relieved, forbid
To speak what pass'd, till some restoring hand
Allay their anguish. Then prepare to hear
Th' unhappy end of this eventful theme.

"He ceas'd; and hell's stern Tyrant, to the suit
Dark-lowering, nodded his assent. His breast
Retain'd its purpose close; till from the whole
He knew to judge, and speak the last award.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK III.—

THE ARGUMENT.

AZRAEL proceeding in his discourse, relates the transactions subsequent to the arrival of BRUTUS in the Island of CYTHERA; and the means whereby the TROJANS were rendered wholly dissipated and licentious. UZZIEL finding them in this state at his return, announces to BRUTUS the command of Heaven, enjoining their immediate departure, and threatening punishment in case of disobedience. BRUTUS having related this circumstance to the Leaders, proposes to depart. Various arguments are brought, by different Speakers, against this proposal, to which all are averse. EVANDER at last advises, that they should consult the will of JUPITER by sacrifices, and follow his direction. AZRAEL, (whom the care of UZZIEL had prevented from having influenced the Speakers;) says, that DARES, the Prince of MELITA, removed the embarrassment which this proposal had occasioned. While EVANDER was speaking, he having accosted the multitude without doors, acquainted them of the purpose of their Chief; and, in consequence of the tumult that ensued, the Assembly was precipitately dissolved.

AS from his couch, the toil-enfeebled hind
Springs light, by sleep refresh'd, and to his work
Tho' hard, returns at last with strength improved,
Eager to finish what with pain began:

Thus chear'd, by such release as hell affords
From grief; again with his compeers, the Fiend
Traversed the fiery lakes: th' Archangel's hall
Again he sought; again the Princes met
In council join'd; when Azrael in the midst,
Before the sovereign's throne, pursued his tale.

"Ye see, imperial Lords, and thou the Chief
Of hosts invincible, the Trojan fleet
Dispersed, and Brutus with his broken bands
Lodged in Cythera's port; ye mark the croud
Darkening the coast, that as the wanderers came
Dismay'd, and trembling from the storm, received
Their guests with chearful hearts, prepared to hear
Their tale with pity, and to lull the sense
In deep oblivious dream. Observant now
Hear how I wrought the people to receive
Strangers thus desolate as friends, and save,
Not spoil them of their stores; and what the means
Employ'd to fix them in the peaceful Isle.

"By me forewarn'd, the Demon mark'd the storm
Afar; he saw the fight, and when the sword
Of fierce Uzziel check'd our wild career,
Amid the centre of his fane he sunk,
Where myrrh and amarant, and the flowers that scent
Sabean gales with fragrance; still exhale
Rich odours, by their simple votaries deem'd
A grateful offering to the Paphian Queen.

There, when the lute, that breathed enfeebling airs,
Had ceased; the spirit to his priests reveal'd
What strangers now approach'd, in what distress
Involved by Neptune's unrelenting ire;
And bade with hospitable rites to greet
The host, to hail them, and in words of peace
To lure with blandishments their thoughts from woe
And urge their stay in those Elysian bowers,
From peril far removed.—Th' obsequious priests
Proclaim'd abroad the Goddess' high command.
Her servile worshippers convened. The youth
Pour'd o'er the strand rejoicing, and the nymphs
Braided with flowers their long-descending hair:
No mark of dread or hostile rage appear'd:
But all uniting, as they reach'd the strand,
With joy received the bands, and loud acclaim.

"Skill'd in the ways of man, and prone to feel
Distrust, the Trojan scann'd with thoughtful eye
The scenes before him opening, and beneath
The masque of studied kindness, fear'd to meet
The snare of deep deceit, pregnant with ills
Sudden, perhaps, and thus conceal'd, of power,
More ruinous in th' effect. Hence, pondering all
Mature, he wish'd to brave impending death,
The first, if death impended. Warning thus
His powers to shun the peril, or to match
Its utmost force, with hearts and hands prepared.

" THUS judging, and resolved, the Leader gave
Command in secret to the few disposed
Beneath his rule, to ply with every nerve
Their oars, intent to reach Cythera's land
Before the rest; to meet with chearful eyes,
Dimm'd by no dark distrust, a generous race,
In semblance gentle, guileless, and humane:
Yet as they moved in peaceful guise, to bear
A soldier's implements, for instant deeds
Prepared, tho' hid from sight, nor to be used
But to chastise perfidious acts, by war.

" THUS judged the wary Monarch; but my fraud
Surpass'd his thought. Arrived, th' observant throng
Fell back, and left an open space around.
He ranged his numbers on the sea-beat shore,
Secure and undisturb'd. He cast his eyes
O'er all, suspicious of some troop conceal'd
Amid the umbrage of embowering groves,
Or vales yet unexplored, prepared to seize
The few he led, defenceless as they seem'd,
Pale, weak, and trembling from the stormy main:
But nought appear'd of meditated ill,
To give alarm. Whate'er the warriour saw,
Of pleasure breath'd; whate'er he heard, infused
Delight unknown before. And now my hand
Withdrew the veil that hid the land beloved
Of Beauty's powerful sovereign. While they gazed,

They knew the Cytherean shades; they felt
The pure and temperate air diffusing life,
And genial pleasure to the heart that beat
With freer motion. From their breasts was cast
Th' oppressive weight of sadness. All the past
Dissolved: the present, like the breath of spring
To man, when our presageful voice no more
Howls in the tempest, kept their busy thoughts
Employ'd. They waked to love, and soft desire.

"While thus great Brutus ranged along the strand
The reliques of his host; the neighbouring coasts
Shelter'd the ships he left. The Cretan Isle
Here opening, in its hundred cities held
An hospitable race, tutor'd to cheer,
But not to spoil the wanderer, cast by heav'n
Abroad; and claiming, in their ports, repose.
Egilia there, and the Laconian soil
With famed Messenia's rocks projecting far,
All in the storm destructive, but to those
Who scape its wasteful rage, secure retreats,
Received the Trojans, deeming that the Gods
In wrath pursued them, and the friendly throng,
Officious in their love, relieved their woes.

"Not long the Princes of the host remain'd
Thus from their Chief remote; but when they knew
What region held him, sought Cythera's groves.
Some heard his mandate; and in haste to tell

Of dire events, and perils now subdued,
Some stay'd not for command. They came to learn
What fate their friends endured, to mourn the dead,
Deprived of funeral honours; to consult
The general weal, and judge what means avail'd
Yet to retrieve the hope so late conceived.

" When now the Chiefs convened, I knew the time
Ripe for the purpose yet conceal'd, to lure
Their thoughts from virtuous acts. By me advised,
The Power they worshipp'd now announced her will;
That all the priests assembling, and the train
That bow'd obsequious at her sacred shrine,
Should hail the guests she favour'd, with acclaim,
Soothing their hearts to love by acts of power,
To bend the stubborn thought, and stir desire,
Even from its first weak embers, to a flame!

" They heard the Goddess, and obedient spread
Before the Princes, and their warlike bands,
Whate'er enchants the sight, or to the snare
Of pleasure draws th' intranced and willing mind.

" Around the strangers hence, from every bower,
The swains, the nymphs assembled; those in robes
Of Tyrian purple clad, and these array'd
In mantles lightly floating to the gale;
Or gay with flowers, that as the bosom heaved
Beneath, display'd the charms they meant to veil,
Swelling and lost by turns. Along the lawn

They spread; and eyed with looks that thrill the heart,
Their stranger guests. The bowers that waved around,
Each to its deepening umbrage call'd the pair
To haste, and waste in love the blissful hours.
Even I beholding, felt the latent fires
Of love rekindling; and remembrance wakes
Even now, the days when mortal charms enticed
Our race to roam the earth, (known by the names
Of Phœbus, Hermes, or Olympian Jove;)
And gives this voice, that to thy great command
Obsequious, leaves no circumstance untouch'd
Of its high theme, to bring these scenes to view.

"NOR yet with matchless beauty to entice
The ravish'd sense, the Cytherean land
Alone was blest. While yet the Trojans stood
In wonder lost, and silence; swell'd the voice
Of music from the groves; sounds as of heaven
Slow trembling thro' the pure and tranquil air,
Ravish'd the sense, and in the soul awaked
Transport ineffable; the breath of love
Temper'd each ruder thought, and held its powers
All rapt, and wandering in voluptuous dream.

"OF love they sung, and beauty's matchless charms,
Subduing heaven and earth. The song began
With Venus, raising o'er the placid wave
Her head, and blushing, as she stood disclosed
To Ocean's gazing Monarch, and the tribe

Of Nereids sporting in their sovereign's train
Imperial Amphitrite, fix'd to her car;
The steeds spontaneous resting in their course
In still amazement! Then indulgent gales
Fanning the deep's smooth bosom (thus they sung,)
Convey'd the Goddess to Cythera's shore,
Where in the mountain's cleft, the Graces robed
Their Queen in heav'n-wrought vesture.—Rising thence,
They sung the daughter of Almighty Jove,
Love's mighty Goddess, whose informing breath,
And genial hand prolific nature feels,
On Ida's brow descending in the pomp
Of matchless beauty:—As she stood unveil'd
With her celestial mates, in hope to gain
The prize with ardor sought—What transport thrill'd
Thy heart, too happy youth! How deep thy sense
Then drank of joy's intoxicating stream;
What time, from Fair to heav'nly Fair, thine eye
Ranged unrestrain'd, scanning ethereal shapes,
Each on her azure cloud skirted with gold,
Reclined in naked majesty! How died
Thy soul, oppress'd with pleasure, when the forms
Alighting, moved before thee with the grace
That holds in extacy the sons of heaven,
Even when they tread the mansions of the bless'd
Clad in the sweeping pall; and not as now
With every charm disclosed!—Ah! what delight

Moisten'd thy dewy eye-balls, when the Queen
Of Love advancing, bent on thee the glance
That chears desponding nature, when the bloom
Of spring yet mantling on her cheek, she reach'd
To thee her hand, her snowy hand; and thou
Trembling with new and thrilling transport, gavest
To her the golden trophy! On her brow
Sat gladness, as she eyed th' imperial pair
Then first abash'd; and turning sought the car
That bore the Goddess to her native skies.

"THUS while the masters of the song display'd
Their skill; the Trojans hung entranced around,
Drinking sweet poison in the syren strain
Enfeebling while it soothed, that lured the heart
From virtue. O'er th' inferior tribes were heard
At first applauding murmurs. They, in thought
Weighing the present with the past, beheld
With joy the means of pleasure yet untried,
And sought not ends remote. By viands chear'd
That braced their limbs with strength, and flush'd with wine;
Awe, while they eyed the region, and the fair
Held them in silence wondering. On their Chiefs
They gazed, impatient for the wish'd command.

"NOT more we stay'd suspended; when with thought
On arduous deeds intent, thy wings out-spread
First tried the void abyss; not more in doubt
We hung, revolving oft in trembling hope

Th' event, than now the Trojan Chiefs, impell'd
By turns to seize the moment of delight
Once, and for ever lost; by turns, to fly
The noxious clime, and soft seducing maid.
Remembrance rouzed to virtuous deeds, but love
On instant pleasure dwelt, th' enchanting smile,
And charms that melt the heart. Thus, but not long
Doubt held them pondering, for a train that caught
All eyes, advancing, called them from the scene.

" Of priests and female ministers, was form'd
The long procession, issuing from a fane
Sublime, that graced the centre of the isle.
In palls the choir approach'd of purest white,
Descending decent to the ground. Their Chief
Bore on his head a crown of wreathed gold,
Emboss'd with breathing forms of little loves,
Swell'd by the sculptor's art: Of silver sheen
The locks that floated o'er him: in his left
He held a lute, and in his right a bough
Of myrtle, bathed in soul-enfeebling dews,
Warm from the altar, where the votaries pour'd
Their gifts, and breathed their vows. Behind him moved
His mates, to sight a venerable kind,
While youths, and smiling beauties closed the choir.

" Before the warriours stood the splendent band,
Beheld with silent wonder; when their Chief
Shaking the branch, whose liquid store impregn'd

The gales with fragrance, and disposed the heart
To dalliance, thus address'd the list'ning throng.

'HAIL, Princes, scaped the perils of the main
'By Jove's command, who here ordains your toils
'To cease, and gives in this enchanting Isle
'Your seat of empire;—hail! The Power divine
'In yonder fane adored, in yonder bowers
'Seen treading light by her transported sons,
'Proclaims your welcome.—Go, possess the land:
'Yours are those happy shades, these beauteous maids
'Are yours: observant of your voice, we stay
'To hear your mandate, and obey. Indulge
'Your thought unquestion'd. Lo! the shady grove,
'And gay companion wait you, if you wish
'To waste an hour in pastime: Or inclined
'To science,—mark the philosophic few,
'That where yon river holds its course, repair
'To distant walks, and from the throng apart
'Raise their rapt minds to heav'n. On themes divine
'They talk, and fix attention, as the strain
'That sinks into the heart. Seek ye to hear
'The Bard?—In yonder cypress-crowned hill
'The seer resides, and flings along the lyre
'His hand, descanting on the first of things,
'The birth of nature, and the wars that shook
'The throne of Jove; or in immortal verse
'Hailing the fathers and the friends of men.

'THE fight awaits you, should ambition call
'Your thoughts to combat; and the blooming fair
'Stands near to crown the victor, and to share
'Herself, his warm embrace.—Roam then at large,
'The denizons of nature, unrestrain'd
'By aught but sated appetite; and taste
'Of every joy.—Lo, where the nectar'd cup,
'The feast, the dance, the jocund choir invite
'Acceptance!—seize the moments on the wing.
'For ah! how fleet the little bow that glides
'O'er life's horizon, sliding into night
'While yet we gaze upon it; and when lost,
'No more to gladden with its blended hues
'The tear-strain'd eye, or in its arch, involve
'A scene dissolving as itself, in air!
'YET hear, illustrious Chiefs, what Venus speaks,
'And dread to disobey. She wills that here
'You rest, nor trust again the faithless wave;
'Not, tho' the signals of th' Olympian sire
'Should call, or seem to call your host to arms
'In distant regions. In the trying hour
'Be firm; nor prompt our sovereign to avenge
'By ocean's angry God, to fury rouzed,
'Your impious deed, and give his rage its way.'
"THUS, prescient as we deem'd of each event,
We aim'd to fascinate the heart, and guard
The paths of access from assault. Nor fail'd

Our means to reach their end. Th' impatient throng
Chiefs, heroes, youths, the heedless, and the wise,
The brave, the timid, by no voice within
Not even by age withheld; consenting, raised
Acclaim. Their leader, pausing, weigh'd in thought
Scenes thus unhoped, not without wonder known;
Nor but with dread survey'd; yet wisdom now
Check'd, ere he spoke, the vain attempt to stem
The torrent in its uproar.—To the time
Yielding with feign'd complacence, he received
The messengers of heav'n with just regard,
And veiling deep his secret wish, replied:

'PRIESTS of a name in heav'n and earth adored!
'Beneath those robes and venerable hairs
'Guile lurks not. Ye behold an host prepared
'To yield obedience to the great decree
'By you imparted.—Yet indulge our hope,
'Ere we pronounce these bless'd abodes our own;
'Before the Goddess' sacred shrine to breathe
'Our vows, and pour our off'rings. Grateful hearts
'Thus speak their thanks, and heav'n approves their end.'

"HE said. The throng in slow procession moved
In silence to the fane. The Trojan Chief
Tower'd in their front majestic.—All was still
A moment! Thus religion shews her power
O'er reptiles born to die!—'Twere vain to tell
What gifts they brought, nor how our mate perform'd

His part. The warriours spread o'er all the land,
In vesture clad that best announced the Power
They served. Afar they cast the shield, the spear,
The helm far-beaming, and o'ershading mail,
To perilous fight that urged, and martial fame:
But cypress boughs instead, and chaplets graced
Their hands, far other arts inured to ply
Than those that mark the warriour. For the fair
He loved, each twined the many-colour'd wreath:
Or shared the feast, or stagger'd from the bowl;
Or languid died to soul-dissolving airs,
Stretch'd in the shade, and by the gentle hand
Of beauty fann'd amid the sultry noon;
Soothing his sense in long and deep repose.
Alone the Monarch, and the Chief beloved
Of heav'n, Evander mix'd not with the throng;
O'er these our arts prevail'd not. Yet they saw
Dire scenes of riot, and repined in vain.

"Thus while the hours in pleasure danced along,
Unheeded;—as I scann'd the scenes around,
Watchful of foes, I saw Uzziel's wing
Again impending o'er the land. I mark'd
His eye, that traversed, ere he ceased his flight,
The region far; and not unpleased, beheld
The grief that dimm'd its radiance, when he view'd
The bands who braved the tempest and the main
So late, now wasting in voluptuous ease,

Lost to each manly deed.—He stay'd his course
Amid the grove deep-shaded, where the Chief
Pour'd on the Lesbian's ear his tale of woe.
Long pondering on the past and present things,
Despair o'erpower'd them. While they wish'd to rouze
The spirit of the host, and to release
Their hands from bondage and inglorious toils;
Awed by the stern command, they fear'd to meet
The rage of Neptune, by experience known
So direful. Hence they framed no settled plan;
But left to distant views, from human ken
Conceal'd, the means to guide their future course;
Still firmly trusting in the voice divine
That call'd them forth to conquest, and to fame.
" MUTE, while he eyed them, stood th' angelic Power;
And dubious, as he mused in anxious thought;
Eager to know what hand unseen had wrought
Such deeds, and studious to restore the scene;
We pass'd triumphant in his sight.—No words
Ensued. His eye flash'd lightning: yet he sought
The inmost shade.—I traced him, and observed
His gesture.—Unresolved he stood not long,
But thus in secret to himself: ' Ye sons
' Of night, who scatter discord and dismay,
' On your own heads recoil your hell-born schemes.
' I know you, Fiends, and from your grasp will tear
' The prey now deem'd so sure.' He said, and shrunk

From sight. Avail'd him then the power possess'd
By those celestials, when they will, to veil
From us their forms with ease; while we, in nought
Beside inferiour, lurk in shades remote,
Thus to be screen'd; or by necessity
Compell'd, elude in borrow'd shapes, their ken.
"MINE eye Uzziel 'scaped, but not my search.
For not Azuriel* to thy great command
More prompt obedience gave, than he, who tried
To ward the peril thus impending near.
"ASSUMING hence at once a form divine,
I sought the Trojan Chief; in him I deem'd
That first th' incensed foe would kindle hope
To gain his purpose; nor the thought was vain.
"'TWAS now the hour of eve, by mortals judged
To contemplation sacred; when the mind,
Shaking aside the labours of the day,
Within itself retires, ('tis thus they speak;)
To judge what best befits. The Monarch then
Escaped a throng in deep oblivion wrapt
Of all the past, nor of the ills to come
Regardful; wander'd to a vale remote;
There, where the murmur of the busy bands
Now spreading o'er the isle, just reach'd his ear,
And held his mind employ'd; he mused alone
Of Jove's high mandate, and th' events by man

* See Book II.

Not to be once presaged, that seem'd to speak
The God offended by th' obsequious act
His voice prescribed.—'Wills then th' Eternal,' (thus
He spoke,) 'that we attempt what fate o'errules,
'And dire necessity forbids to try?
'Is thus the Lord of Nature in his power
'Controul'd?—Or thus restricted, spreads not yet
'O'er time and nature's wide expanse, his ken?
'Tis dark.—Shall hosts so late unskill'd in aught
'But feats of arms, and tried in many a toil;
'Seam'd o'er with honourable scars, and taught
'From glorious deeds alone to hope renown;
'Shall they in shameful bondage waste their years,
'Wielding the distaff, and entwining wreaths
'To lure a wanton eye? Forbid it Jove!
'Hear thou Omnipotent, from Pelion's height,
'Whence comes thy voice in whirlwinds, or the roar
'Of thunder to the ear; a mortal's pray'r
'Involved in perils, not by human eye
'To be foreseen or warded, while he held
'In sight thy great command. Dispel the cloud
'That shades the future; deign, Eternal King!
'To point his path, and shew thy sacred will
'Unveil'd. Disclose the means that best avail
'To gain thy purpose: for thine ardent eye
'O'er nature glancing, knows the thought of man.'

"He said, and ceasing, as in deep suspense,

A moment stood entranced.— Uzziel seized
That time. The Monarch heard the tread of feet
Behind him, thus absorb'd; and as he turn'd,
Beheld a Sage with locks like driven snow,
A port majestic, and a piercing look
That scann'd the heart. I knew him, tho' he pass'd
The search of human sight. Not unappall'd
The Chief survey'd him, when, approaching slow
He paused; he raised his hand; and thus began.

'To me the doubts of thy presageful mind
'Are known. To warn thee of impending woes
'I grant this solemn interview, to man
'So rarely deign'd.—Go, then, resolved, and bear
'This mandate to your host.—Depart;—the land
'That waits you, lies afar. Know, here you walk
'Forbidden ground. The air is death! Obey,
'Or dread chastisement. Powers averse concert
'Your ruin. Trust the voice divine, and wait,
'Again to hear it on Sicilia's shore.'

"I saw the proud Celestial while he spoke,
Turning abrupt, and mark'd him down the vale
Slow-moving, reckless as it seem'd, what eye
Might trace his course, or ear receive his tale.

"Meanwhile the dire contagion like a pest
O'erspread the land; from every shade arose
The voice of dissolute and loud misrule,
Tumultuous. Here a band inflamed with wine,

And there, by fiercer appetites, indulged
Their wish unquestion'd. Bandied to and fro
From mouth to mouth, the jest, the laugh went round
With these incessant; while the festal song
Chearing with those a merry rout, inspired
The roar of long applause.—'Twas all a scene
Of sport insensate, waste, and lawless joy.

"WITH these to parley, in their jocund hour,
Their wiser Chief forbore.—Pensive he sought
His tent, and mused, amid the peaceful calm
Of midnight wakeful, on the state of things,
And change unhoped so late. He scann'd in thought
All that had pass'd since heav'n's Eternal first
Reveal'd his purpose. On the storm he dwelt,
Dire to his hopes, that scatter'd all his Powers:
Nor knew what God offended had awaked
The warring elements, or what their end.
Last, on an host of heroes, changed at once,
As in the passing moment, from a race
Long tried in arms, to Pleasure's sensual sons,
Weak and effeminate, he turn'd his mind.
He mark'd the spreading ill, and of the word
Divine observant, for he deem'd from heav'n
The solemn messenger; with morn prepared
To call the Chiefs, and in their ears announce
What seem'd the will of Jove, reckless of aught
But what the time, and what the God required.

While thus the Chief resolved, th' Angelic Power
Of Ocean call'd his Ministers around,
Heav'n's servile herd, that swelling his proud train,
Bear his imperial mandates, with loose plumes
Sweeping earth's circuit. Zophiel there appear'd,
And Elim, radiant with his wing of flame;
Lamah for swiftness famed, and Asphodel
Foil'd by this arm in combat.—These at once
Offer'd their ready service.—By their files
Inclosed, their Leader gave his charge to all.
'Ye Powers celestial, know th' Eternal shields
'An host assembled here, but doom'd to raise
'On other shores an empire. Yet He grants
'For ends of great import, th' infernal race
'To try their virtue. Hence the sons of Hell
'Have caught them in their toils, and lure their sense;
'Quenching each better thought in sordid joys,
'To fix them here for ever. I have rouzed
'Their Chief to action, but I leave his host
'Free to their choice; for thus th' Almighty wills.
'You then explore with watchful eyes, the scenes
'Around; and keep afar th' insidious Fiends.
'With morn the Leaders meet to hear the charge
'Of heav'n's great Sovereign. Be their last resolves
'Free, and uninfluenc'd by infernal guile.
'Bend to this task your spirits, else the Fiends
'Will draw them into ruin.—Other work

'Now calls me hence.' He spoke, and rising high
Amid th' ethereal void, was lost to view.

"I HEARD his words, provoked, yet undismay'd,
For now my hand had fix'd on every heart
The love of sensual joy, too powerful far
For aught but terror to efface. I saw
Th' ethereal tribe encircling all the land;
Scornful; and yielded to his rule, secure
Of triumph in th' event, from sight conceal'd.

"HENCE sunk in deep delight, and soothed with dreams
Of joy, the Trojans heard the herald's voice
At morn, reluctant, erst a welcome sound:
And inly murmuring, sought the Leader's tent,
Dreading what once they wish'd, a call to arms,
Or hateful summons to some distant land.

"SUCH were their thoughts, when each assum'd his place
In council. Brutus, rising in the midst,
Serene, reveal'd the purpose of his soul.

'CHIEFS of a glorious host, in perils tried,
'Tis fit that they who bear the toils of life,
'Should taste its comforts. This inchanting isle
'Hence from the storm receiv'd you; and the Sire
'Of heav'n ordain'd its joys with temperance used
'Your labour's just reward. But now the God
'Again commands us to the field.—By him
'I come commission'd.—Hear the voice of Jove!
'His Priest, heaven-taught, or messenger divine

'From high Olympus; if I deem aright,
'Hermes, or great Apollo, in a form
'Of human semblance met me, and announced
'The Thunderer's will.'—'Go,' thus he spoke, 'and bear
'This mandate to your host: Depart; the land
'That waits you, lies afar. Know, here ye tread
'Forbidden ground. The air is death! Obey,
'Or dread chastisement:—Powers averse concert
'Your ruin. Trust the voice divine; and wait
'Again to hear it on Sicilia's shore.
'Abrupt he mix'd in shade. Words that confirm'd
'The Delphic God's command, on me impress'd
'Just reverence. Know, great Chiefs, the time demands
'Cool thought. What heart but shrinks to meet the wrath
'Of heaven's Almighty! Now th' occasion calls
'Your utmost vigour forth. My mind impels
'By pray'r and added sacrifice to please
'The Goddess still revered, who here received
'Our toil-worn legions, and invites to stay:
'Then with propitious gales to steer our course
'Where Jove ordains, abroad; secure that He
'Whose voice directs our path, will bless its end.'

"The Monarch thus; but humbled, saw his words
First void of power. Awe held th' assembly mute
A moment. Yet not then the speaking eye
With gladness lighten'd; on each face was traced
(Their Chief excepted, and his Lesbian Mate;)

Th' expressive lines of dread, and deep dismay.
Thus while they paused, I mix'd amid the throng
Veil'd in a form divine, and unobserved
Stood near; yet not with purpose to impress
Their thoughts or deeds, save in the last extreme;
Dreading to rouze the Thunderer; but resolved
To mark each act.—Young Dares met my sight,
The Prince of Melita, by me inform'd,
And framed to speak; fluent and prompt of tongue;
In action, fearful. Near the Lydian King
He sat, Evœmon; each in dalliance loose
More skill'd, than in the rough and perilous field
Of combat. As they parlied of the theme
Apart, he rouzed the Melitenian's thought
Ev'n to the utmost height, and art supplied
What bore a semblance of the right, design'd
To darken and delude. Thus taught, the Chief
With bold demeanour rose, and thus replied:

'WHAT words, great Chief, have pass'd thy lips, un-
'Of deathful import!—Shall we slight the voice [weigh'd,
'Of Jove's imperial Daughter? shall we brave
'Her wrath, and leave the hospitable land
'She gives us to possess; the stream that laves
'Our toil-worn frames; the gentle race, ordain'd
'To yield delight unceasing? Shall we change
'Again, for whirlwinds madding o'er the deep,
'The bowers, the vales, the happy shades, to peace

'And joy devoted in this blissful Isle?
'Not thus, illustrious Prince, the Sire of Men
'Sports with his offspring; not insensate, wakes
'Their hope, to sink it in the dust so soon,
'Kindling and quench'd at once. Th' Eternal eyes
'The race well pleased, and works the good of all.
'HE, to this land of pleasure gave our fleet
'To hold its course, and in its dire career
'Repell'd the whirlwind. Yonder Priests announced
'His counsels heav'n-inspired.—The messenger
'Thou saw'st, approach'd, perhaps, to try our strength,
'Whether we hold our purpose to remain
'Here fix'd, or waver in our thoughts;—perhaps
'From adverse Gods he came, prepared to whelm
'Our host in final ruin, should we trust
'Once more our fortunes to the angry main:
'Hence, not like Iris on her glittering bow
'He stood, or Hermes hovering on the wind,
'But dark, and shrouded in a mortal frame,
'And wrapping deeply in mysterious words
'His doubtful warning: for he named no coast
'Our seat of rule at last; but bade await
'What Jove determines, on Sicilia's shore.
'Just heav'n! Sicilia's shore! Immortal Powers!
'Saw not her coast the tempest that o'erwhelm'd
'Our host so late? Half from its lawless rage
'Saved by the hand of Jove, does He command

'Again to brave its terrors? Is his hand
'Now stretch'd to save us from the gulph, and now
'To whirl us o'er its verge?—Thus to conceive
'Of heav'n's Eternal were unjust. His voice
'Calls us in joy to waste the flying hours,
'Our toils forgot.—Hence to this bless'd abode
'The God convey'd us, and display'd his will
'Then, when he drove us past Sicilia's shore,
'To bid us taste, in this inchanting Isle,
'Of pleasure unrestrain'd; and when his Priest
'Forbade to trust again the faithless wave;
'Spoke of the trying moment, and enjoin'd
'A fix'd and steady course—The trying hour
'Now comes: improved, it brings the high reward
'Of long felicity:—abused, we rush
'On ruin, and awake the Thunderer's ire.'

"Here ceased the fraudful Chief; nor had presumed
Thus to withstand the Prince revered by all,
But that strong passion in his breast o'erpower'd
An awe that else had check'd him, and controled.
To raise the ardor in each throbbing breast
Now waked, to greater height; the Lydian Prince
Arose, effeminate, and soft. His hair
In tresses by the hand of art disposed,
Fell flaunting on his robe. His voice was tuned
To gentlest cadence; and in feeble words,
Yet waking dangerous thought, he spoke his mind.

'Ah! what, great Brutus (thus he said) inspires
'Those dreams of combat, and destructive war!
'Are we then cloy'd with happiness, and prompt
'To cast the bounty of the Gods aside,
'Soothed with delusive hope? These happy shades,
'This sacred mansion of a Power divine,
'Screen'd from the roar and tumult of the field,
'Is ours.—The Being who commands our stay
'Befriends us; he is hostile, in what guise
'Soe'er approaching, who with rigid voice
'Enjoins departure.—Ah, how short the date
'Of man's frail life! To see the flying hours
'Revolve in pleasure, by no night obscured;
'Or if obscured, yet breaking from the cloud
'With lustre unimpair'd; to court the arts
'Of peace; and provident of thought, to place
'Along the field of life, to its last bound
'Joys in succession rising, as the state
'Of man, from youth to slow declining age
'Glides on;—to steal with unambitious mind
'Calm o'er the vale of quiet, undisturb'd
'By idle dreams of empire, tasting bliss
'Pure and unenvied;—this is wisdom, Chiefs,
'The boon celestial by the throng o'erlook'd
'That chase unreal forms; but on the few,
'The loved of heav'n bestow'd.—Hark! from yon woods
'What melting airs! What beauteous choir awaits

'To crown our hours with pleasure! When thou call'st
'Our aid to counsel on the sum of things,
'Great Prince; what order best befits the state;
'What sanctions best promote the general weal;
'What laws avail to make thy people blest,
'Even to the latest ages; then my tongue
'Shall give my thoughts free utterance:—but to leave
'The soil by heav'n assign'd, the peaceful vales,
'The shores, that from the war of elements
'Received us trembling, and the race that fly
'To minister delight;—forbid it Jove!
'My heart disclaims it, and my voice dissuades."

"He said; and of a throng inured so late
To martial deeds, so well our arts prevail'd,
Not one opposed his words:—but all appear'd
Consenting.—Now th' assembled Peers had left
Their Chief, determin'd;—but Evander rose
Slow from his seat, and claim'd their patient ear.
His look commanded reverence, and his port
Attentive thought.—I cursed him, when he held
His Peers in silence listening, and began:

'Our stay, ye Chiefs, in this inviting land,
'Or purpose to depart with instant speed,
'Follow the will of Jove.—In vain we speak
'Of bliss now known, and dream of joys to rise
'In long succession here, if heav'n's great Sire
'Ordains our empire in some distant clime.

'Or in this region, should He fix our seat
'Of rule,—'twere madness then to quit the scene.
'WHAT wills th' Eternal then? Princes, be this
'Your first desire to learn! Invoke by vows,
'By pray'rs and due oblations at his shrine,
'The God to point our course, resolved to trust
'His voice, and guidance. Once, his Priestess urged
'Our voyage, and spoke prophetic, of its end.
'We launch'd obedient on the roaring main;
'The winds assail'd us:—but th' Omnipotent,
'Checking their headlong fury, hither brought
'Our host in peace. Intranced in deep delight,
'Here ye would waste the flying hours of life
'Slothful, nor dread the wrath of angry Gods,
'Even till it burst in thunder. Is your pride,
'Ye race of heav'n beloved, for ever fled?
'Where is your courage, Chiefs, your love of arms,
'Your thirst of glorious deeds? Ah! in your hearts
'Live not the embers of their former fires
'Smother'd, but not extinct? I wish to wake
'The latent sparkles to a flame. Even now,
'In this cold blood, still ebbing as it creeps
'Back to its source, and freezing on the verge
'Of life; the memory of the past, excites
'A transient summer. I recal the hour
'With joy, when coping in adventurous fight,
'With Eratosthenes, the great in war,

'A Chief from frozen Ister, with an host
'Of fierce barbarians; I subdued at once
'The Prince; and by the lyre's melodious notes
'From savage life reclaim'd him, and inspired
'With gentler passions.—In your prime of days
'What here awakes a sudden ardour, works
'The heart to tumult. Then ye warriours, rise
'To God-like acts; once more be great! subdue
'Your love of pleasure first, and sensual bliss,
'That bane to nobler deeds; assume the spear,
'That, soil'd and mouldering, when it meets your sight,
'Will call the hero's best blood to his cheek,
'O'erspread with honest blushes. If the Gods
'Shall fix our empire here; aspire we then
'To raise a mighty nation, o'er the rest
'In fame preeminent for virtuous acts,
'Not less than warlike triumphs. But if heav'n,
'Slighting our pray'rs, should bid us spread the sail
'For some far distant region; he who points
'Our course, will guide us to th' appointed shore,
'And crown our toils with honour. Let us seek
'Hence, if my voice avail, the fane of Jove,
'Waiting his sign in silence, and prepared
'To hear with reverence, and with speed obey.'

"Thus while the Lesbian spoke, not unalarm'd
I stood, observing that the native love
Of arms rekindled in each hero's breast;

Quelling the looser thoughts we sought to raise
Locrinus, Camber, Alban, Sparta's Chief,
The bold Athenian, and the Lycian heard,
And instant sprung to life; as he who shakes
Aside the bands of slumber, and proceeds
Again to mingle with his kindred men.

"Yet not the number felt this keen desire.
They heard reluctant what Evander spoke,
And cursed in secret his persuasive tongue.
But while the warriours stood, in doubtful thought
Wavering; the Chief of Melita confirm'd
At once their purpose. While Evander spoke,
Dreading th' event, he sought unseen the throng,
Around the tent assembled, all in hope
To know what end their leaders held in view.

"To these, no more the warriours, but a crew
Degenerate, wishing in voluptuous ease
To waste their lives, and breathing noxious air,
The trembling leader brought a tale of woe:
Of toils he spoke, direful and unessay'd,
Yet to be tried; of regions unexplored
Far o'er the world of waters to be sought
In vain for many a year; and if obtain'd,
With peril to be bought in dreadful fight,
On fields heap'd wide with slaughter. Turning quick
From this disastrous scene, he bade them eye
The streams, the bowers, the hospitable shores,

The friends they loved, the feast, the genial bowl,
The fair, with pleasure ever prompt to bless
Their happy hours; and take a last farewell.
'For lo! imperial Neptune waits to try
'Your courage, warriours, on the watery waste!
'Rouzed is th' incensed Divinity! I see
'His trident heaving from its base the deep,
'To bid us welcome!'—Speaking thus, he raised
Their minds to frenzy; for another storm,
More than the bolt that rends the solid rock,
They fear'd. Impetuous as the Ganges, swell'd
With torrent floods, and thundering to the main,
They pour'd tumultuous onwards; threat'ning loud,
And raising in their rout the din of war.
"ALREADY Brutus, now elate of heart,
Rose to enforce Evander's words; and saw
With joy the ardour of his Chiefs restored.
Already on Uzziel's band I mark'd
The smile of gladness spreading, while they deem'd
The plan too just to meet repulse at once,
Even from a mind averse; while reason sway'd
Its thoughts, or reverence to the Power supreme.
But thus employ'd, unwonted sounds assail'd
Their ears, of tumult.—Listening to the noise;
'No farther perils on the deep, no search
'For other lands;' they heard the crowd pronounce
With one accord. The monarch strode to meet

Their rage, indignant. But th' attempt was vain
To reason with their madness. I who view'd
The desperate throng withdrawing, let the tide
Now hold its natural course. Unseen I mark'd
Th' event rejoicing. Of th' assembled Chiefs,
Some herded in the throng, in secret pleased,
And smiling. Some around the sovereign stood
To ward imagined peril: but no fight
Ensued. 'Twas soon divulged that Brutus yet
No steady purpose held. The tumult ceased
By slow degrees. The crowd dispersing spread
Along the champaign, and the Trojan stood
Forlorn and hopeless, with the few that shared
His grief; committing now to heav'n the work,
By man's unequal hand essay'd in vain."

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK IV.—

THE ARGUMENT.

UZZIEL returns, ascends to Heaven, whither he is followed by AZRAEL. ITHURIEL receives a commission to visit the mansions of certain Beings, named the Ministers of Vengeance, supposed to have been created immediately after the Fall. Of these, (whose offices, &c. are described), ITHURIEL singles out ORMUL, the Angel of Pestilence, whom he accompanies to Earth, with the purposes of punishing and reclaiming the host of BRUTUS. ORMUL spreads desolation over the land, chastising some by temporary punishments, and others by death. The few remaining Chiefs, now humbled, and assembled by BRUTUS, agree to consult the will of JUPITER by sacrifices. The augury directing them to sail for Sicily, they set out on their voyage to that island. AZRAEL, driven to despair by this circumstance, relates the particulars of his combat with UZZIEL, as his last effort; and concludes his narrative with the fatal issue of this action. SATAN, not disapproving of his conduct, commands him to make the Giants acquainted with the arrival of BRUTUS.

HERE paused the Demon, pondering on the scenes
Now to his sight disclosed, and from his peers
Bespeaking fix'd attention to a tale
Of ills unheard; and what th' infernals feel,

Rejoicing o'er the woes of mortal race,
Of pity to their own. Sighing, he cast
His eyes around, and thus pursued his theme

" AGAIN the nymphs with joyous hearts received
Their lovers now triumphant, who consign'd
At once the dire remembrance of the past,
And thought of future peril, to the winds.
Again they sunk delighted in the shade,
Soothed by the lute's enfeebling airs, to dreams
Of visionary joy. The feast, the bowl,
The dance inviting, and consenting fair,
Conspired to quench the transient ardor, raised
So late, and soon subsiding to a calm.

" THUS roll'd the flying hours serene along;
When from the watery waste Uzziel steer'd
Once more his course, and sought Cythera's shore.
Him, Elim, sweeping with impetuous wing
Th' aerial void, inform'd what tumult quash'd
Their hope half-raised, and of the Trojan host,
Again by pleasure lured, and sensual joy.
He heard; nor now alighted on the ground
As erst; but hovering o'er it on the wing,
Explored each scene with penetrating eye,
Not unobserved. I mark'd him in his flight,
And saw him swelling with alternate ire,
And indignation, as in every grove
Our triumph met his sight; nor aught avail'd,

Of all his means, to work his Lord's command.

" Not long he paused, suspended in his thought
Of what the time required; but cast an eye
That spoke weak pity on the croud, or grief,
Perhaps for pride, and boasting thus subdued:
Then spreading his broad pinions to the sun
Splendent, and full display'd; he soar'd aloft
To heav'n. His mates stood wondering on the land.

" I knew his purpose, and unaw'd by thought
Of peril in th' attempt, pursued his track,
In form an inmate of th' ethereal domes,
Once known, and still remember'd. (Heav'n's high King
Or saw not, or allow'd the fraud.*)—We kept
Our line unerring; nor Uzziel stay'd
His flight, to mix in converse with the train,
That ever busy on th' ethereal void,
From world to world still pass, from sphere to sphere,
Bearing their sovereign's mandates o'er the vast
Of space and nature; nor with Uriel held
Discourse, as in his car th' Archangel sat
(A God in semblance,) on the orb of day,
Effulgent o'er his peers. Forms not unknown,
Yet new from absence, took my sight afar,
As sailing on the deep of air, we left
Suns that invest the orient; and beheld
The Thunderer's servile worshippers enthroned

* Job ii. 1.

In light, and seeming splendour; yet debarr'd
The first of blessings, freedom, the delight
Of working plans of ruin; and the joy
Of gratified revenge. Those climes o'erpast,
Th' ethereal mansions came at last in sight;
Ours once."—A groan here bursting from the heart,
A rough tear check'd his utterance. Yet the Fiend
Thus spoke, repelling soon th' unwonted sigh.

"NOT sooner in the vales, profuse of song,
Uzziel ceased his flight; nor sooner mix'd
With kindred spirits, than a select band
Surrounding, hail'd him with acclaiming voice,
As those who meet acceptance; and convey'd
Before th' Eternal's throne.—I stood apart,
Not daring near approach, yet mark'd the whole.

"YE know, infernal Powers, what cloud o'ershades
The sanctuary of heaven's Supreme, the hill
Whence rolls his eye, pervading all the forms
Of nature, and upholding what His breath
Inspired with being. Ere Uzziel spoke
Meanly obsequious, veiling with his wings
His face, and silent at his Sovereign's throne;
Gabriel, I knew him, thro' the clouds approach'd
With solemn step, and thus preventing, said:

'THY deeds are known, Uzziel, and approved:
'Nor more from thee is ask'd. Depart, resume
'Again thy rule imperial o'er the main.

'The charge to punish where indulgence fails,
'Another claims.'—Thus speaking, from the throng
He call'd Ithuriel forth. Ithuriel came
In warlike guise, of no inferiour name,
We know, in heav'n. Th' impenetrable shield,
Its owner's boast, o'ershadow'd half his frame
Behind; and by his side the flaming sword
Waved as he moved; dipt, if report say true,
In sulphurous fires, when first endow'd with force
To shake the promontory's base. Prepared
Thus to receive command, th' Archangel gave
Power from the Highest, (thus they name their King,)
To tread inferiour mansions, unexplored.
Yet even by us, tho' ye have seen the forms
There placed, let loose, and gathering all the winds
To scourge the human race, when deem'd, as we,
Rebellious to their Lord. When man, betray'd
By thee, great Leader of embattled hosts,
Broke heav'n's command; the ministers of wrath,
Thus call'd by mortals, first with sin received
Their birth, ordain'd to punish what thy guile
Had made resistless;—such their Maker's law.

"From regions far remote those spirits ascend,
Spreading around the fiery pestilence,
Or kindling meteors on the vault of air,
Or breathing war and discord in their flight,
With fury uncontrol'd. Weak-judging man

Then deems the fervid wind impregn'd with steams
Of putrid exhalation, or the mind
Inflamed to madness by ambition's dream;
Or our resentful race devising plans
Of ruin. For as yet no mortal eye
E'er saw those messengers of death, but He,
Th' adulterous monarch, who aghast, beheld,
What time the wasteful plague with slaughter heap'd
His land, and deeply in his heart, Remorse
Planted her scorpion teeth;—before thy floor,
Araunah, with his sword th' avenger stand,
His keen eye flashing; yet his lifted arm
Arrested in its course! Else had our rage
With death been sated, and destruction swept
The whole elected race at once away.

"Of these, th' Archangel to Ithuriel's hand
Consign'd the charge.—'Go,' thus he said, 'call forth
'Ormul, the minister of Fate! with him
'Seek Asmodeus' Isle:—a foreign host
'There waste their hours in riot; though design'd
'For nobler ends. Let his destroying hand
'Chastise their disobedience:—whom to spare,
'And whom to strike with unrelenting heart,
'Let heav'n's great Sire direct. Depart, the time
'Demands unusual deeds; nor brooks delay.'

"This heard, Ithuriel unreplying, turn'd
With due obeisance, and on speed intent

Shot down th' ethereal height.—I held afar
His wing in sight, with one determined aim,
Dreadless of ill: as thou who greatly borest
The Thunderer's fury, when thou sought'st the base
Of Sinai's flaming mount; what time its spire
Was clad in darkness, and th' Eternal stood
In solemn converse with his Priest beloved;
Luring beneath his eye, the multitude
To rear thine altars, and with sacred rites
To worship all the host of heav'n.—Of thee
Then taught, I held o'er many a radiant orb
My course, hell-prompted; and with joy beheld
Aspaltes, Mammon, Phlegon, and the hand
Of Dagon, in Philistia once adored,
Demons, by thee commission'd to confound
The order of creation, at their posts;
In spirits pure, who kept their maker's rule,
Exciting lawless passions, and prepared
To tempt th' unheeding innocence, that roams
At ease in temperate climes, and happy isles,
(As erst the human pair) that breathe of heav'n;
By forms that lure their guileless thought,—to ill.

Those regions pass'd, a solitary void
At last received us, by the wandering rays
Of suns remote illumined; as the earth
By lunar radiance, or the star of eve
Chequering her face with intermingling light,

And shades projecting o'er the vales afar.

" WHEN now we swept the gulph with flagging wing,
Tired with its speed; a veil of air condensed
To form, and black as midnight, seem'd to shade
Some track yet unexplored.—When nearer view'd,
A pile immense, rear'd on the solid base
Of nature's crude originals, appear'd;
High as the mountain's barriers, that invest
This deep, secured from heav'n's ethereal beam:
Stretch'd out immeasurable on the soil
Beneath, it look'd the mass of adamant,
That bounds creation.—Here we ceased our flight;
He on his errand bent, and I in hope
High raised, to mark the scenes display'd within.

" NOR long suspense remain'd; for to the touch
Of that commission'd Angel, back recoil'd
The portal thundering, as Ithuriel pass'd
Light o'er th' interiour space; while I, behind,
Not bearing his keen glance, though in a guise
Celestial, plunged amid the clouds that hung
O'er all the region, and survey'd unknown,
What use or pleasure prompts us to explore.

" I LOOK'D: and lo! a wide expanse, outspread
Around me, met my sight; above, illum'd
By wandering flames, that cast a lunar ray;
Yet ever shifting, like the flying clouds,
Oft seen with dread, that shade autumnal skies;

While solid darkness veil'd the space beneath,
As with a mound, impervious to the sun.
" HENCE, (when heav'n's Lord, imperious in his will,
Hangs out the signals of approaching wars,
Famine, or earthquake, or intestine plagues,
That menace nations) burst presaging flames,
That staining oft the pall of antient night,
O'er some devoted city hold the sign
Of woes impending near.—To man, they seem
Like dragons coping on contending winds
In fight, or banner'd hosts arranged on clouds
Of direful aspect; or avenging fiends,
That shake o'er earth the fiery-streaming sword,
Drench'd in the lakes beneath; like those that pass'd
O'er Abyssinia, and the land of Nile,
In form like serpents, shooting, as they spread,
Arrows of livid hue that scatter'd fires.
" THE mildew here resides, whose baleful breath
Rifles the foliage of the smiling year;
Frost-dropping mists, and desolating blasts,
That shaking with their wing th' autumnal fields,
Fling the ripe harvest to the fowls of air.
O'er these an angel holds supreme command,
Unlike th' ethereal race; but ye have seen
His form, when soaring on th' expanse above,
His many-colour'd plumes reflect a pale
And varying radiance.—Here he rolls the clouds

In heaps before him, as th' Eternal wills:
Dire signs! and gives the whirlwind to disperse
The fluid mass; then seeks his antient place,
Where watching, as they rise, the vapours dim,
O'er that wide region spread, he works to shapes
Innumerous, shifts to many a splendent hue
The airy exhalations, till their rays
Again illumine earth's inferiour sphere.

"INCLINING slightly, the celestial held
Onward his course, and eyed th' incongruous forms,
As one in haste. Sounds, as of clanging arms,
Announcing war and tumult, led his step
O'er that wide space, till near its utmost bound.

"AND now the implements of wasteful rage
First met my sight, the welcome engines, doom'd,
Perhaps in future ages, when the crimes
Of man shall rouse his Maker into ire,
To people hell with victims. Pil'd in heaps
They lay;—the fiery sword, the arrow keen,
With sight-confounding speed, to cleave its way;
The nitrous fuel, dire consistence! whence
The forked thunderbolt arising, peals
Through this mishapen gulph, and ploughs it up
Even to its inmost depth; the chariots wing'd
With flame, that rushing down the steep of heav'n,
Throng'd with terrific shapes, that bid fell plagues
Bestrew the earth, as stars the vault of air—

O'erpower created force. The task were vain,
Nor grateful were the tale to number o'er
Those arms, whose force, before untried, o'erwhelm'd
This host of Gods, and from our native seats
Expell'd to realms of night, and scenes of woe.
"Close by the pile a form tremendous stood;
Above, Azzazel call'd; I heard his name,
Though oft mine eye has mark'd him as he swell'd
The tide of battle; and mine ear received
His voice, like torrents thundering in their fall;
Yet now at hand beheld, he seem'd in size
To match the moon's bleak mountain, deem'd by man
A spot, but nearer seen, appears an height
O'ershading her wan orb! Oft in his hand
He waved the sword, or struck the clashing shield;
Or grasping, as in ire, the tube immense
Whose blast, amid the night of combat, rends
The starr'd expanse; as one who scorns controul,
He rais'd aloft the trumpet; yet forbore,
Heav'n-check'd, to give it breath.—Beside him stood
Terror his eldest born, and wild Dismay,
Two baleful shapes, to frighted mortals known
But from their influence. Here the Power resides
Not long: but roaming o'er the world at large,
Calls forth embattled legions to the field,
Disastrous in his walk, and rules the storm,
That humbling all the towers of human pride,

Tears up the base of Empire. Soon his hand
Was felt, and wondering nations gave the name
Of Mars th' armipotent, that uncontrouled,
And lawless wastes the globe, wide-erring;—he
Bends to his sovereign's mandate, by His voice
Oft stay'd reluctant, in his mid career.

"Not distant far another angel shape,
Dire shape! enveloped in a sphere of flame!
(Even I recoiling eyed him;) seem'd to wield
The thunder of heav'n's Mightiest. From his eyes
Flash'd the red fire terrific, as he roll'd
Their orbs, that fix in our immortal hearts
Anguish unspeakable, but pour on man
Inevitable fate.—Sublime he tower'd,
Thought-quelling form! and hovering on the rear
Of midnight, as Ithuriel came, appear'd
Already arm'd, pluming his wings, outspread
Immeasurable length; while in his front
I saw the sword portended, that bespeaks
The last dread menace of th' Eternal's ire!

"These were the first of messengers, ordain'd
To spread disease and death o'er all below.
What other plagues He fashion'd in his wrath,
To scourge the nations ever prone to err,
I sought not to explore; but stood in thought
Resolved, and turn'd around a searching eye.

"Of all, Ithuriel singled in his walk

The minister of fate, who wields the sword
Of desolation. 'Ormul,' (thus he said)
'Descend,—for thus th' Omnipotent commands—
'In terrors clad, and instant seek the land
'Where Asmodeus holds his rule.—A race
'Design'd for higher ends, there waste their hours
'In sport, the victims of infernal guile.
'Lured from the paths of virtue, they resist
'Each gentler mean, and rouse their Maker's power.
'Go then, tremendous in thy wrath! Assume
'Thy fiercest aspect: put the mantle on,
'Bathed in that fuel'd vapour, from the dregs
'Of loathing nature steam'd; and bare the blade
'That smote pale Egypt once, and struck dismay
'To each cold heart. To guide thy fatal hand,
'I join thy flight, and bring by heav'n's decree
'Lights fraught with signs horrific, that appal
'Weak man, presageful of impending woe.'
"I HEARD, and reassuming, though unseen,
My native shape, shot on impetuous wings
To earth, intent to ward the coming stroke;
Or meet its force prepared. Cythera soon
Waved in my sight, and ceasing on its mount
My course, I saw, with momentary joy,
The fascinated throng with chaplets crown'd,
And clad in flowing robes that swept the soil,
With luxury unsated. I beheld

The Power by mortals reverenced, as of Jove
Descended, throned amid his sumptuous fane,
Whose altar, rear'd on golden pillars, fumed
With grateful odours; and the victims led
By servile worshippers to soothe his ire.
The bands, but late so dreadful, here approach'd
His shrine with reverence; and by Venus' name
Invoked his influence to subdue the pride
Of some disdainful nymph; their utmost hope:
Such change had pleasure wrought, and sensual dream.
" HIM, of his fate unheedful, I bespoke,
Frowning indignant.—' Spirit effeminate,
' Collect thy thoughts. Far other theme demands
' Thine heed, than languor, and luxurious ease.
' Know now, the Thunderer, rising in his might,
' Sends forth his ministers. Ithuriel comes,
' And with him Ormul, shaking o'er the land
' The scourge that scatters plagues. With speed propound,
' If aught thy working mind suggests of guile,
' To blast his purpose. Arms, I deem, our last,
' And worst resource.'—The spirit, terror-struck,
Stood speechless: Ormul's dreaded name impress'd
Such horror on his heart.—With faultering voice
At last: ' Descends that Angel with the robe
' Of fire?—I know him; for destruction marks
' His tread accursed.—But, let him sweep to hell
' The people, and their lords. No easy task

'Awaits his hand wide-wasting, if he means
'To drive them hence by force. The threaten'd rage
'Of Neptune awes the legions, and desire
'Prompts them to rest in this enchanting land.'

"WHILE yet we counsell'd on th' event so near,
Nor fix'd our final purpose, weighing means
To ward the peril, now by fraudful plans,
And now by desperate deeds; we saw the pair
Shading the empyrean. In the front,
Ithuriel, like the herald that proclaims
Dire acts, approaching, held aloft his flight,
Winnowing with rapid wing th' aerial void.
Behind him slowly moved his dread compeer,
As if the storms, that shake the deeps beneath,
Should loosen Hecla from its base, and lift
Half its rude mass on high, investing far
The land of Thule in its ample shade;
Such seem'd to me the shape (by mortal sight
Yet undiscover'd,) as he sail'd on air.
Bare was his arm outstretch'd, and fiery red
His rolling eye-balls. By his side the bow,
And quiver hung, with fate's unerring darts
Stored thick; and waving in his wasteful hand
The sword of desolation, soon to spread,
And do the work of death. Aghast and pale,
Weak Asmodeus, as he gazed, recoil'd
By threats unawed, and wish'd the gulph of hell

To screen him from the sight.—I stay'd, resolved
To mark th' event of this presageful scene.
" The sun, declining from his airy height,
Now brought pale evening on; when from the woods
The sons of riot homeward bent their way,
Vacant of thought, yet joyous; ceasing oft
Their walk, to mix in sudden dance, or sing
The light catch, bursting from an heart at ease;
Or from the wantons tittering in the shade,
To steal at intervals the short embrace;
Then lead elate their willing captives home,
Smiling in gay disorder, and with feign'd
Reluctance yielding to th' encircling hand.
" Music as wont, and festal joys proclaim'd
Their welcome, when the city met their sight,
Pouring its numbers forth to bid their guests
Partake the banquet, and soul-chearing cup,
That drowns in extasy the thought of woe.
They sat.—But dread now first chastised their mirth,
For meteors shooting o'er the lurid sky
Announced disasters in approach, and seem'd
To all portentous signs. Ithuriel held
These in a globe, in mould ethereal framed.
High on the mid-way air he steer'd his course,
And now, when darkness wrapt the face of things
Unseal'd his orb. At once the wandering lights,
On ether spreading, shifted in their range

To forms innumerous. Now like harpies seen,
They mark'd, while passing, with devouring eyes
The genial feast. Anon they scatter'd wide,
And moved like hostile armies, clashing shields,
As we, when on the hosts of heav'n we rain'd
Arrows in sulphur dipt, and central flame.

" As pale Judea shook thro' all her coasts,
What time th' Assyrian girt the pompous towers
Of Salem with a force that bade the King
Of heav'n defiance; when the prophet spoke
Of pagan triumphs, and a captive race
Fated to wander by Euphrates banks
An age in misery; as she, appall'd
At first, the Trojans left the sumptuous board
Unsated. On th' aerial void they gazed,
Dread-struck, and suppliant call'd the Powers above
T' avert the doom these warning signs foretold.

" Twelve nights, the forms ascending on the clouds
Shot streams of fire, and twelve successive days
The host, repentant while they mark'd the scene,
With morn resumed their pastime, and consign'd
All thought of peril to the winds, dissolved
In sensual pleasures, tainting all the mind.

" And now, the fiercest of the Thunderer's train,
For chastisement ordain'd, and deeds of death,
Ormul at last approach'd: his gorgon hair
Dropt blood, and from his glance the land recoil'd,

Its mountains bending, as when earthquakes shake
Their summits wrapt in darkness. On the throng
Fixing his stedfast gaze: 'Where mercy fails,
'Let justice have its scope.' He said; and shook
His baneful mantle spreading pests, and smote
The blasted earth, and tainted every gale
With poison. Like a mist, th' envenom'd cloud
O'ershadow'd all the isle; and as it swell'd,
Bloating the orb of day, convey'd the seeds
Of life-consuming maladies. Involved
In night, the dreadful Minister of Fate
Scatter'd despair and ruin o'er the scene.

"ITHURIEL mark'd his course, and singling out
His victims, heaven directed, shew'd him whom
To spare, and to destroy. On those he launch'd
His barbed arrows shooting rheums, fire-tipp'd,
Into the starting limbs; or spotting o'er
The frame with livid ulcers, as of old
Thou smot'st the Man of Uz: O'er these he raised
The scourge horrific, as the trail that marks
To man the comet's flaming path, and swept
At once the crew devoted, to their doom.
For song and pastime, now was heard the wail
Of woe from every shade. Even Nature felt
The shock repining: and the groves, but late
So rich, stood naked to the blast. Declined,
Yet in its prime, the herbage of the plain,

As nipt by frosts untimely; and the field,
So late the seat of pleasure, seem'd a rock
Swept by rude whirlwinds, or by lightning scathed.
"But chief the Spirit on th' offending host
Of Brutus wreak'd his rage. No age he spared;
But smote the hoary head, and pierced the heart,
The blameless heart, yet innocent of ill,
In undistinguish'd ravage. While I view'd
The work, tho' conscious of its end, revenge
Smiled in this breast triumphant.—Hell, methought,
Was throng'd with shades by my avenging hand.
"Ten days, the Trojans unreclaim'd by ills
Yet held their purpose firm. Brutus untouch'd
By pain, and Lesbia's prudent Chief forbore
To urge their counsels more; but left th' event
To Jove, expectant of the God's decree.
But now, when each with horrour ey'd the fate
Impending direful o'er their heads; and saw
In thought the shafts of Phœbus, (thus they named
The Power) already pointed at his heart;
The foes I dreaded then, repentance came,
And grief, by suffering waked.—The few yet spared
Of Chiefs, but late so boastful, shrinking now
From perils near in prospect, meanly bow'd
Prostrate before the Gods, despised so late,
Or slighted in the noon of prosperous change.
These humbled now, approach'd their Monarch's sight,

In voice and gesture suppliant. All demand
A council. All submissive own the rod,
That scourged their madness, just. I tried to rouse
In some their former spirit—but in vain.
Not Neptune's threatned wrath avail'd to quell
The dread of instant death. In human minds,
So far the sense of present ill transcends
The fear of ruin, sure, but deem'd afar.

"A GROVE amid the centre of the isle
Stood leafless; yet majestic, tho' decay'd,
O'ertopp'd th' encircling woodland. Planted close,
The trees, with shrubs and intermingling boughs
Inclosed an ample space, and fenced from view.
The heartless Leader here convened his Chiefs,
Who came with heads declined, and chearless eyes,
By shame depressed, or dread; unlike the train
So late with florid aspect, who had heard,
With smiles, the menace of the Thunderer's ire.

"PALE and dismay'd, th' assembled warriours stood
Around their Chief, in silence.—He beheld
The band unalter'd, with an eye that spoke
Pity, but not reproach. The scene was still,
And solemn. Strow'd behind them, lay the dead
Deprived of funeral rites; and Fate at hand
Brandish'd her sword before them. Heaven's gay sons
No more inclosed within their spreading wings
The Chiefs, nor screen'd them from approaching foes.

Fled was the minstrel herd; and I was left
Alone, to act whate'er my thought approved,
Uncheck'd; but thought avail'd not;—Yet I mark'd
The Prince, who raised his hand, and thus began:

'TIS vain, ye warriours, with repining heart
' To scan the past; for man is prone to err.
' True wisdom, from her past experience, gains
' Rules to direct her course; converting thus
' To sovereign blessings even the worst of ills.
' Then sink not, Chiefs, beneath the arm of Jove,
' Tho' now to vengeance bared; but yet unbend
' His wrath by just oblations, and the vows
' That meet acceptance. Bowing at his shrine
' With reverence, ask we now his leading sign
' To point our course; obsequious to his will
' In all; and fix'd to follow, where the God
' Appoints our seat of rule. Thus may his hand
' Avert our final ruin, and restore
' The numbers lingering on the verge of life;
' A formidable band, should He prolong
' Their date, and crown with victory our toils.'

" THEY heard; and all with glad consent approved
His purpose, scorn'd so late; so much th' event
Had tamed their pride, and dread subdued their mind.

" I SAW the pomp of sacrifice prepared;
Beheld the victim slain; and heard the Priest
Imploring suppliant, Him who rules supreme

On Ida's cloud-enveloped spire, to stay
His hand in wrath extended, and to place
Their seat of empire in that blissful isle.
He ask'd:—but on the right was heard the voice
Of thunder muttering ire; and light'nings quench'd
The altar's flame. With horrour all recoil'd,
Owning the God averse. Again they raised
The fire; again the white-robed Priest approach'd
The sacred shrine, and call'd th' Omnipotent
To warn, if on some foreign shore, he meant
To fix their last retreat; and now injoin'd
Their host, as erst, to seek Sicilia's land.
When lo! a bright and steady flame consumed
The sacred forms, and rolling on the left
Propitious thunder shook the skies!—No doubt
Then held them of the God's supreme command.
All trembling, with submissive thoughts, prepared
Once more to prove the perils of the main.

"Nor now the Cythereans, nor their Lord,
Wish'd to detain their guests;—the wrath of heav'n
Depress'd their sinking hearts with horrour thrill'd.
Though now dire Ormul ceased to bathe in blood
His desolating hand, and cooling gales
Arising, clear'd the hot and tainted air;
Though from their beds the drooping numbers crept
Abroad, and hail'd the sun's returning beam;
Yet not the voice of music met their ear

As wont, nor near them stood the festal board.
No more the nymph with fond endearments, met
Her lover, late so welcome.—'Hence,' they cried,
'Unhappy strangers, fly!—Some angry God
'Pursues you, and the Furies shake their scourge
'O'er lands that give you rest. We yield whate'er
'Ye ask of food, to serve you on your way,
'Till heav'n reveal your fate; but wish not more
'To join your converse, or to share your doom.'

"Thus they.—In vain I sought their Guardian: He
Sunk in the cavern's deep retreats, to shun
The rage of Ormul; for the gloomy Pair
Still sail'd on clouds, suspended o'er the isle.

"Meanwhile the Monarch with his Chiefs prepared
Their fleet to launch on ocean. Of his bands,
The Melitenian shared with vulgar names
One fate, in death. The Lydian yet survived,
To fall (if right I read the fates) beneath
A female arm in fight.* Though many died,
Amid the general waste, a mighty host,
When now collected, spread along the shores.
Ere yet they sail'd, two milk-white heifers bled
('Twas thus decreed,) at Venus' sacred shrine:
Observant of her word, the Monarch bow'd
Before th' incensed Divinity; nor spared

* B. xi.

To sooth, by gifts alternate, as by prayer,
Her wrath; and call to pardon, what the voice
Of heav'n's high Lord enjoin'd. He vow'd to rear,
When on the destined coast at last arrived,
A Fane devoted to the Paphian Queen;
A monument to speak the grateful heart
To each succeeding age, and tell the cause.

"And now the ships received their wonted freight,
Of men, and arms. Uzziel took his charge
Once more:—the streamer floated on the gale.
Slow as they spread the sail, a favouring breeze
Swell'd the broad sheet; and high ascending, rose
To heav'n the servile pair, their task fulfill'd.

"Urged then by headlong fury, when deceit
Avail'd not more, I rush'd on desperate deeds.
Assuming quick my native form, I raised
The shield that bloated in his height the sun;
And grasping in my hand the sword that tore
Proud Michael's battle, when thy powerful arm
To me that gave the weapon, tried its edge
In conflict, met Uzziel face to face
Opposed, when soaring on the middle air.

"Few words ensued. My lowering aspect spoke
Defiance. Each received it, and return'd.
We rush'd to combat:—but th' attempt were vain
To paint our battle, now maintain'd aloft,

With wings resounding, like the roar of storms,
To those beneath; now on the mountain'd deep
Fought, as we flung abroad the sheeted flame
From sword on sword that clash'd, and shield on shield.
To you the tale of desperate fight were vain;
For ye have seen the jarring elements
Mix'd in rude fray together. Ye have met,
In fight, the spirits of heav'n; and know what arms
They wield; and what their power, in conflict tried.
"As when two columns of embodied air
Borne by contending winds, along the vast
Of space, and charged with tempests, meet at last,
Pouring the fierce tornado o'er the lands
Of Pegu or Malay; the natives stand
Aghast, expecting when the winds shall lift
The sheltering forest on its wing:—amazed
And frighted thus the Trojan host appear'd,
Eyeing our onset, as our mates who view'd,
Told of their wonder. On the skies they gazed,
The deep, the shores, alternate; for they saw
Nought but the raging elemental war;
And call'd their fancied Gods, and look'd despair.
"Thus long I match'd Uzziel in his strength,
Not without hope of conquest; for I held
The fight alive with vigour unimpair'd.
But heav'n's high King at last depress'd my heart

With dread, till now unfelt. I raised mine eyes
Aloft; and lo! the thunder hung prepared
In his right hand, for vengeance! While I paused,
It burst, and striking my devoted head,
Pursued me prone-descending: flash on flash
Shot thro' my frame; and in its rear the bolt
Forked, and flung with power resistless, tore
My form, and thus disshevell'd, sent to hell."

He ceased: mute anguish in his throat suppress'd
The groan deep-heaved.—Could fiends have pitied, fiends
Had felt his pangs. But sympathetic woe
Melts not their vengeful bosoms. Yet the throng
Look'd on in silence; and attentive, mark'd
Their sovereign. He, restraining in his heart
The struggling passions, thus pronounced his doom:

'Fall'n spirit, cease with unavailing plaints
'To glut the Thunderer's wrath. I blame not thee.
'Thy task was hard; to thee, to higher Powers
'Perhaps unequal. Judging from th' event,
'We err; for well-concerted means bespeak
'Sound thought and industry mature; tho' shades
'Even from our piercing sight conceal their end.
'Yet should my scheme prevail, our foe shall boast
'No lasting triumph. If I judge aright,
'Severer trials yet, and heavier toils
'Await this race devoted, ere they rear

'Th' imagined empire.—But some fitter time
'My purpose claims.—Thou Azráel fly, meanwhile,
'With speed to Albion's solitary shore:
'There seek Gerontes, and inform the Chief
'What host assails his kingdom. Bid him rouse
'His powers, and to their efforts join thine own.'

He spoke:—the Fiend now joyous spread his wing
For instant flight; and from th' assembly moved,
Pondering his dubious work, the Prince of hell.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK V.—

THE ARGUMENT.

ALBANUS is excited by the Guardian of the Island, to make an excursion into the interior country, along with EUGENIUS the Athenian Leader, in order to discover the disposition and circumstances of the enemy. Finding his proposal acceptable both to him, and BRUTUS, to whom he imparts it, the two young men set out, with a body of followers prepared to defend them from any sudden attack. In the mean time, the Giants, apprised by AZRAEL of their purpose, send VORTIGER with a party, in order to bring them prisoners to GERONTES. The youths proceed on their journey; but taking a different rout from that of VORTIGER, they obtain a full view of the fortress, and situation of the enemy; and conclude from both, that they will not accept terms of accommodation. In their return, they are betrayed by VORTIGER into an ambush, from which they are rescued by a bold action of ALBANUS, who kills one of the party; and the camp being alarmed, his companions retire disappointed.

PARENT of men divine, alike renown'd
In arts and arms—on ocean's wide extent,
As o'er the peopled earth—BRITANNIA, hail!
Glad, to thy native regions I return,

From climes now first explored by fancy's eye.
On thy loved hills I breathe the thymy gale
Elate, while rapt imagination strays
From shade to shade, delighted in her range,
With forms still seen with transport!—Thou whose hand
Indulgent, spread before the Muse's eye
New scenes, and braced her timid wing to soar
High o'er the verge of nature!—Power sublime,
Deign now to join her humbler walk; inform
Her thought; and bid the lyre's resounding frame
Swell to its themes responsive; for She pours
Far other notes, than He whose magic hand
Call'd music from the tremulous chords, that held
The forest wondering; bade Meander's stream
Convey, when Lydia's melting fair intranced,
And yielding, caught the sound. Inspired by Thee,
The Goddess, recent from th' oblivious wave,
With plumes unsullied, now resumes her song.

One day th' imperial Chief had now consign'd
To rest. The second morn advancing, fringed
The clouds with crimson, and refulgent gold,
That veil'd her radiance;—when, ere yet the host
Resumed their arms, the Guardian of the Isle
Framed in her thought, the plan that best avail'd
To crown her sons with conquest. Hence she view'd
The throng, in silence wrapt, and pondering long
What Chief to honour with the first command,

Young Alban caught her sight. The warriour lay
Amid his arms at rest. The bossed shield
Pillow'd his head; and careless o'er its orb
Floated his auburn tresses. Half disclosed,
His cheek, that glow'd with native beauty, spoke
His blooming youth; while at his side, the sword,
And helm refulgent show'd the hero near.

HIM, slumbering thus, th' ethereal Power beheld
With pleased attention. Hovering o'er his head,
Iris she seem'd, the messenger of Jove,
Dropt from her many-colour'd bow, with wings
Bright in resplendent plumage, sprinkled o'er
With gold and azure; while a veil of air
Mantled her form divine. Around him flamed
The void, or seem'd illumined, as she hung
In sight. The Goddess, thus confest to view,
Reveal'd her purpose in Albanus' ear.

'FAVOUR'D of heav'n, attend! I come to point
'The path that leads to honour. While thou sleep'st,
'Brutus, deep-pondering on th' eventful scenes
'Before him, and the foes so darkly known,
'Now in his thought revolves the Leaders o'er,
'In hope to choose some Chief approved in deeds,
'And resolute of heart, to search the land
'Around; and learn what place contains the foes;
'What ramparts guard their fort; how great their power
'In arms; and what befits him to explore.

'Hear then the Messenger of Jove!—Awake,
'Imperial youth, and to thy Sire present
'Thyself, with bold Eugenius, for th' attempt
'Prepared. Declare the voice divine. The Chief
'Will grant thy pray'r; and prosperous fate attend
'What Jove commands. Th' occasion calls—Arise!'

THIS said, the Goddess on refulgent wings
In thunder parted. With the sound the youth
Was roused, and springing lightly from his couch,
Seized his bright helm at once, and snatch'd his sword,
Fired by the heavenly vision; for he felt
A spirit, by the guardian Power inspired,
That urged him onward. Soon the warriour stood
Cased in refulgent mail; and issued forth,
Bright as Apollo, when his youthful charms
Allured the maid of Argos, and his lyre
Held the glad forest listening to his lay.

MEANWHILE, the Leader of th' Athenian band,
Roused, tho' unconscious, by the heav'nly Guide,
With morn's first radiance shone in arms. He strode
From path to path, o'erlooking all around
With just observance; for he mark'd the wood
So near, with dread; and fear'd th' approaching foe
Hence to the wakeful guard he stole unseen,
The witness of their acts: but nought appear'd
To merit censure. Each perform'd his part
With care; nor aught but long repeated howls,

Roll'd from the waste, yet lingering, and afar.
Him, thus intent, and scanning every scene,
Albanus met, a Prince beheld with joy:
For friendship long had join'd their kindred souls
In league; and though in years th' Athenian Chief
O'erpass'd his youthful partner, yet his age
Scarce reach'd the prime of life; tho' wisdom mark'd
His deeds, and ruled each well-concerted scheme.
To him Albanus soon in few reveal'd
The vision, and the God's supreme command,
Not without transport heard. Eugenius grasp'd
His hand, and thus, delighted—'Let us seek
'Thy sire. This counsel is of Jove: 'Tis He
'Who calls us to the labour, and will crown
'Our work, though perilous, with a prosperous end.
'Meantime the flying hours forbid delay.'
Thus he, and with Albanus bent his course
To Brutus, planning in his thought the war.
As when two lions, from their native den
Let loose, in triumph shake their shagged fronts,
Rejoicing in their might, and rush abroad,
Young and unpractised yet in fight, to prove
Their kingly race in combat; courage swells
Their hearts, and hope to hold th' inferior tribes,
Like their great sires, in awe: Not less desire
Of fame and conquest fired th' intrepid pair.
Nor doubtful of the Monarch's glad assent,

They sought his presence; for th' Athenian Chief,
Sure of the guard, that watchful took their stand,
To mark and act whate'er the time required,
Held, with a heart at ease, his onward way.

THIS pass'd; while Brutus weigh'd with anxious thought
Each scene, and wish'd to learn, ere yet he left
His camp, some tidings of his direful foes.
He eyed the forests and the wilds unknown,
Not undismay'd, in hope, while thus employ'd,
To find some Leader daring, yet approved
Alike in war, and gentler arts, to search
The region with a chosen band around;
And to accost the savage race with words
Of peaceful import, if inclined to peace;
Or if on battle bent, and deathful war,
To make their prowess known, their arms, and means
Of safeguard, or offence; what lands they held,
And where to fix the host from harm secure.

THUS while he mused, uncertain of his choice,
Th' attempt so arduous, and such mental powers
Required, with strength of arms to crown its end
Successful;—lo, the pair approaching, took
His sight!—At once he mark'd them, and divined,
In thought, their purpose with delighted heart,
Though yet unknowing of the God's command.

ALBANUS now, with modest grace, declared
What Jove's imperial messenger announced

In vision; while in bolder words, his friend
Urged his request, of one emprise to part
The perilous honour.—'Grant,' (he cried) 'our pray'r,
'Great Prince, to search, behind yon woodland's depth,
'The land unknown; and for th' attempt, provide
'What best befits, as wisdom rules thy mind.'

As when that hardy Chief, who first explored
Untrodden desarts, with a chosen few,
Toil'd up th' aerial Andes, and beheld,
Unmeasured regions pass'd, and mountains clothed
With snows eternal, from th' empyrean height,
The Chilian land beneath, mantled in green;
And streams that to the vale convey'd their store
Of treasur'd gold;—exulting, view'd the scene
Now spread, and pointing to his bold compeers,
Sky-wrapt, and breathing elemental air,
That happy land, exclaim'd,—'Behold the climes
'Doom'd to reward your labours!'—Such delight
Was thine, great Brutus, while Albanus told
Of heav'n propitious; such thy joy to hear
Of Jove, the guardian of thy sacred line,
Through many a trial, and disastrous scene,
Guiding with steady hand, thy course in all.

Yet soon the Chief resumed considerate thought,
Scann'd each event, and fix'd the surest means
To gain a prosperous end:—then to the pair,
Now calm and listening, thus sedate began:

'HEAV'N prompts this counsel, and its sacred voice
'Commands our ready service. Yet prepared
'To yield obedience to th' Eternal's will,
'Still let us hear, what prudent thought suggests
'To guide our course in peril; nor neglect,
'Confiding rashly in superiour aid,
'Means ever grateful to th' immortal Powers.
'Go then;—but arm'd and guarded to your work,
'Amid the numbers spreading o'er the field,
'Select a train, not numerous, but of tried,
'And steady courage; nor intent to rush
'On fate precipitant, nor in the hour
'Of trial, meanly shrinking and appall'd.
'With these assembled, hold some winding path,
'Lest on th' encounter of assaulting foes
'Ye stumble unaware. Know, Chiefs, 'tis yours
'To search the region; not in martial guise
'To meet a savage people, and provoke
'Untamed barbarians, desperate in their rage.
'One should ye meet apart, attempt to win
'His stay by gentle means; yet hither bring
'At last, obsequious, or averse. Retain
'Some track in sight; nor rushing heedless on,
'Lose, rashly bent to seize a flying band,
'The means of sure retreat.—Eugenius, thou
'Taught in the school of wisdom, though in years
'Thyself yet immature, protect with care

'Thy younger friend: for though he bears a mind
'Quick to discern the peril yet remote,
'Nor void of thought to ward it, yet in fight,
'In age so green, nor by experience tamed,
'Rough as the mountain whirlwind.—Now depart,
'And heav'n conduct the work itself inspires.'

He ceased.—The friends with pleasure heard his voice,
And instant plann'd their course. Before the camp,
Amid the vale, a solitary oak
Spread its broad arm afar, and cast around
An ample shade.—'Twas here the Chiefs agreed
To meet, encircled with selected friends,
Firm and resolved. Then parting, each prepared
His troops in peril tried, and deeds of war.

Dreading to part Locrinus from the host,
Or Camber dreadful in the rage of fight,
On other hands Albanus fix'd his choice;
He call'd great Phrenor out, and bade him arm
With speed. Alcander, Harpax join'd the train;
Icetas lightly arm'd, and skill'd to trace,
Along the forest's devious maze, his way;
Phlegon with these, and Hyacinthus came,
Prepared alike for standing fight, or swift
With lightning speed to catch the flying foe.
Beneath these Leaders moved a noble few,
All with one spirit fired, and bent to meet
Rough opposition with the shield, and spear.

Nor with less care, th' Athenian Prince disposed,
And arm'd a hardy troop; Laodamas,
And warlike Iphitus strode in their front,
Screen'd with o'ershading mail. The number pour'd
Behind, all nobly emulous of fame,
Splendent in shining arms, and train'd in all,
To yield unforced obedience to their Lord.

As to the solar orb, th' attendant flower,
That drinks the genial beam, unceasing turns
Its head, observant of the radiant form,
As of Endymion erst the pale-eyed Queen
Of solitude and shade;—all held their eyes
Thus on their Chief's intent: one action ruled
The martial band. All onward trode the field
In silence, ranged in close and deep array.

And now, before the Monarch's judging eye,
Each pass'd by turns, then sought th' appointed place,
Obtain'd by Alban first, whose tents advanced,
Lay to the spot contiguous. When convened,
And order'd;—in his hand th' Athenian raised
A cup o'erflowing with celestial wine,
And pour'd a due libation to the God
Supreme, who guides the wand'rer in his course.
All lift to heav'n their eyes in fervent pray'r,
Not unobserved of Nature's sovereign Lord;
Nor heard but with assent. The sun, that flamed
Now near his zenith, call'd them to their work.

They turn'd; and plunging in the forest's shade,
Amid th' incircling woods were lost to view.

WHILE thus great Brutus, and the Trojan Chiefs
Prepared for every fate; the Fiend of hell,
Fraught with his sovereign's mandate, unappall'd
Soar'd on th' aerial void. He pass'd the gulph
Formless and void, that heard not the command,
LET THERE BE LIGHT! Then headlong down the steep
He shot, where Ocean's unfrequented wave
Roars on the verge of Night: Anon he scaled
Fuego's icy mountains, and the heights
Of Cordilleras, winter's drear abode:
Thence, to the simple race that ranged the vales
Beneath, he seem'd some monster of the deep,
Raised by the parent sun, to scourge the land;
Or dragon wing'd, that from his flaming hair
Shakes desolation. At the gloomy shrine
Of Vitzlipultzi, joyous, from afar
He snuff'd the scent of blood; and, rising high
O'er isles that feel the penetrating beam
Of Cancer in his rage, he touch'd the shore
Of Afric, rapid in his flight; nor staid
To mark the Lybian desarts, or thy scenes,
Morocco, tho' beloved, where groans the land
Beneath a tyrant's scourge: but high in hope
To reach the goal, he sought Hispania's coast;
And borne along the Pyrenean heights

On wings afar display'd, the fated Isle
Met his glad sight, and nearer, as he came,
The camp fair-opening, and the warriour throng.
Pleased with his prosp'rous voyage, the Demon cast
His eyes around, and saw th' embattled host
All ranged in order, on the ground opposed
To the wild woodland; but no trace remain'd
Of ships that bore them to the coast. At once
His thought divined their plan: he deem'd them fix'd
As fate, to conquer, or in fight to fall.
As when a fox, who sees the well-earn'd prize
Torn from his grasp, and lodged beyond his gripe,
In some secure recess, around it steals
With cautious tread, inspecting with keen eye
Each chink, and marking apertures that give
The prey to sight, and wake the distant hope
To repossess it;—Azrael thus explored
All parts around with penetrating glance,
In vain. The Leader's care had guarded all
From fraud, or bold assault. The Demon stood
Foil'd, yet observant, and resolved to bear
Tidings of high import, what time he sought
Gerontes, and his horrid mates. With morn,
He saw Albanus and his friend approach
The Chief, and learnt what heav'n's great Lord inspired:
Nor more the Spirit stay'd in doubtful pause;
But sought confirm'd the mansions of the foe.

Arrived, he wish'd to meet th' assembled Peers,
In some familiar shape, and hence assumed
Thine aspect, Gerion, of Gerontes sprung.
Him, as his sire, inured to deeds of death,
The King commission'd, with a ruthless band
To waste Hibernia's fields. A scanty space
Elapsed, he seem'd return'd, and knew what rage
Would fire the Monarch's breast. Yet, thus in form,
The Fiend now sought Gerontes' gloomy dome.
Strong, as the trunk of some deep-rooted oak,
To sight he look'd, with ragged hair, and eyes
That match'd the lion's, or hyæna's glare.
An iron mace he swung, and in his walk
O'erpass'd with ample steps a length of soil.
He leapt the fence. The savage crew retired
To give him entrance; while with dauntless heart,
As one in haste, he strode in silence on.

Long, in the spacious woodland's gloomy range,
A lordly bull, the monarch of the waste,
Had held supreme dominion. Round him grazed
In peace, while uproar was abroad, a train
Of lowing heifers, and a numerous race
Obsequious to his lead: while from his roar,
When heard remote, and from the spreading horns
O'ershading his broad front, and to the foe
Portending instant fate, when seen at hand,
The savage tenants of the desart fled,

O'eraw'd. Ev'n in his walk, the Giants shunn'd
To meet this sovereign of the wild, untamed,
In native fierceness. Him Romerus seized,
And pushing backwards, while he held his horns
With might superiour, stretch'd him on the soil:
Then to his dire companions show'd the corse,
All round him grimly smiling, as a prize.

Soon at the festal board, the savage Chiefs
Convened, where now the victim lay prepared
To sate their appetite: A lawless band!
Recounting various, as they gorged their prey,
What deeds each powerful arm atchiev'd in fight,
Clamorous, and dissonant. Romerus sole,
Reclined in sullen majesty, beheld
The rout indignant; for untaught to boast
Of deeds, tho' great to meet the mightiest foe,
He heard the war of words with just disdain.

Thus sat Gerontes with his fierce compeers;
When, breaking sudden on the noisy crew,
Bold Gerion came in sight! Amazement seized
On all, but ire inflamed the Monarch's soul.
As when a lion, whose assiduous care
Has rear'd his brood, and from his seat expell'd
The pair, amid the wilderness to raise
Some distant empire, sees the young invade
Once more his solitary den:—what rage
He feels, was thine, Gerontes!—'Whence!' the sire

Exclaim'd impetuous;—but the Demon broke
Quick on his words.—'Avails not now, to tell
'What cause recall'd me, from my purposed course,
'To other regions. Arm, ye mighty Powers!
'Know, foes of face more formidable far,
'Than e'er ye met in fight, favour'd of Jove
'Who hither brought them, cased in shining mail,
'And as it seems, in all prepar'd for war,
'Darken the shore in myriads. Bent they look
'On death, on conquest; for no ships appear
'To bear them from the coast; their hands have spread
'O'er these the rage of fire, their care no more.
'UNSEEN I scaped their fury, and conceal'd
'By night's involving shade, explored their camp.
'I learnt that Brutus leads th' embattled host,
'Of Trojan lineage, whose dire race the voice
'Prophetic, doom'd the conquerors of the land.
'BUT hear, ye Champions, what imports your weal
'To be imparted.—Ere I left their host,
'To their consenting Prince, two warriours spoke
'A purpose fix'd; to search the woodland's depth,
'And of the natives' aspect, and their force,
'To bring intelligence. Of us their Prince
'Is warn'd, howe'er advised. I heard him grant
'Consent. I saw him, with his hand, direct
'Their onward course, pointing the path that led
'To this lone fortress, tho' by woods enclosed.

JUDGE then, ye sons of Neptune, what befits
'The season, whether in one line to rush
'Impetuous on their host, inferiour far
'To ours in might, tho' clad in shining arms,
'And strong in numbers; or by stealth to seize
'The Chiefs, already, if I judge aright,
'Advancing with a chosen band, to mark
'Our state, but not to fight, while uncompell'd
'By fraud, or force.—For me, this heart impells
'My hand to deeds of death. Speak then your wish;
'I come to act whate'er the time requires.'

THIS said, surprise, with horrour not unmix'd,
Held mute th' assembled Chiefs. On him they gazed,
And on each other, unresolved. But soon
Thy breast, Gerontes, felt its native rage.

'TALK'ST thou of stealth?' the furious monarch cried,
'To Us this language? Shall this feeble race
'Of earth, whom nature pours in heaps abroad
'To serve her mightier sons, shall they affright
'Our godlike tribes, or dire predictions strike
'Dread to one champion?—No!—Unown'd by Jove,
'The strength to conquer, when we rush to war,
'Lies in our native prowess. Hence, ye Chiefs!
'A scene of slaughter calls you. Let us pour
'At once to battle.—Gods! What dire amaze
'Must strike those pigmy legions, when they view
'Our wasteful hands confounding all their might,

'And spreading ruin on them! This old arm,
'I deem, will scatter o'er the bloody field
'Their mangled carcases; and our great Sire
'Behold, well-pleased, their reliques on the waves.'
RAGEFUL he said, and brandished in his grasp
The oak's rude mass; the shagged spoils, that clad
His broad-spread chest, hung horrid as he moved;
And sparkles from his rolling eye-balls shot,
Appalling every heart.—Nor less inflamed,
Around him madding throng'd the Giant powers,
Shaking their matted locks, and by their cries
Announcing horrid joy.—And now had death
Sated his thirst with blood, and, as his prey,
Received the youths, now hanging on the verge
Of fate, unheedful; but a sage revered,
And deem'd their wisest, Vortiger, opposed
The Monarch's dire resolves. Deep-versed in guile,
To wisdom unallied, that mocks her form
In folly's gaze, he wish'd not to contend
In fight with heroes: but insidious schemes,
That oft o'ermatch'd the prudence of the wise,
His subtle thought devised. Tho' rage possess'd
His breast, he held it in his heart conceal'd;
And, though of savage aspect, yet maintain'd
A calm demeanour. As he rose, in act
To speak, the noise subsiding to a calm,
This counsel in a gentler voice he gave.

'JUDGE not, great Ruler of our glorious line,
'That less I dread the war, or less desire
'To crush those strangers, who presume to tread
'These shores in arms unlicensed; that I speak
'Of temp'rate deeds. But sober thought directs,
'Tho' pride becomes a monarch, when outbraved,
'To know what hosts we meet in fight; what force
'They boast, and what their implements of war,
'Their numbers, and their purpose. All remain
'Yet undiscover'd. Chiefs like ours in size,
'May lead their bands; and if they match in strength
'Our force, their arms must give superiour power.
'Or grant them all, in stature, as in might
'Surpass'd by us; yet what, ye warriours, say,
'Avail to javelins, and destructive swords,
'Like those the Albians wield, frames as our own,
'Though braced with strength, defenceless?—Ills like these
'Tis wise to obviate; and the time presents
'Means of proportion'd force. Amid their mates,
'The pair who now direct a select troop,
'Stand high in honour. Seize we then the youths,
'By guile or fierce assault, with their rash band.
'One, as by chance escaped, may be return'd
'To tell the others' fate; and bring their Prince
'To talk of mercy, though defiance now
'Lowers on his front. From leaders thus secured,
'Such circumstance will rise, such facts as strike

'Conviction to the heart; and thus inform'd,
'We judge impartial what our state demands.
'Meanwhile let Gerion, whose wise conduct claims
'Our praise, awake Androgeus to the war.
'Bid him exhort that ruler, to convey
'His war-like Albians from their hills. The tribe,
'At his command, will count our foes their own.
'Else, in resentment of remember'd wrongs,
'They, with th' invaders leagued, may point the means,
'Great as we are, to sink us, and destroy.'

As when the deep's black bosom, vex'd with storms,
Tumultuous swells, and dashing on the rock
In thunder, wastes its force; when now the winds
Subside, tho' calm'd, yet heaves with gathering waves,
That menace future uproar;—such dread calm
Reign'd o'er the savage throng. Their silence spoke
Assent, o'eraw'd, not pleased; for reason here
Scarce held more empire, than amid the wild
She owns o'er wolves half-famished, when the lambs
Lie bleating in their sight. Nor stay'd the Fiend
Command; but left th' assembled Peers, resolved
To bring to fight Androgeus, with his bands.

Not sooner on the ground Gerontes dash'd
His mace indignant, growling as with rage
Suppress'd; than Vortiger assumed the charge.
Selecting from the crowd a ruthless crew,
He train'd, and form'd them to the work assign'd.

WHERE sloping to the stream, the bank declined,
Betwixt the forest, and the swelling tide,
The path lay open to the shore; its sides,
Broider'd with grass, and intermingling flowers,
Thy gifts, great nature, smiled; not far a cave
Scoop'd out, the work of years; capacious, deep,
And dark, inclosed a mighty space, ordain'd
To hold the victims, or in perilous hour
The younger offspring, with the female train,
Secure from harm.—The giant here disposed
His troops in secret; and enjoin'd to wait,
Ere yet they launch'd, in open sight reveal'd,
His signal to come forth. The band, thus placed,
He moved to lure the strangers to the snare.

MEANWHILE, the Trojans, choosing for their track
A path frequented less, though shaded o'er
With trees, approach'd the fortress, unperceived
Of all within. At first, a distant noise,
Like Niagara's torrent, heard afar
By those who tread Canadian wilds, assail'd
Their ears. Anon, the river and the fort,
Rear'd rudely on its bank, stood half disclosed,
And glimmering thro' the wood. Eugenius mark'd
Heedful the prospect, check'd his forward mates
In their mid course; and thus address'd the throng.

'FRIENDS, know we seek not these forlorn abodes,
'To spread the rage of battle, but to scan

'What claims observance, with discerning eyes;
'And chief, to view the people, and their deeds,
'Their ramparts, manners, implements of war;
'From these to judge what conduct best befits
'Our state; to join in league, or rise in arms.
'Here then, ye warriours, rest, secure from harm;
'While I with Alban pierce the forest's bound,
'Bent on advent'rous acts. Assail'd;—our shout,
'Or yours, should danger press, will soon unite
'Our hands. Meanwhile be cautious, and conceal'd.'

He said.—The troop retiring, sought the shade;
All but Albanus: he with pleasure join'd
Th' Athenian Prince, and onward held his way.
Now, near the forest's utmost bound arrived,
Scenes yet unknown arose; unlike whate'er
Had met their sight; not void of art, tho' wild,
And of extensive range. A mighty space,
Fenced with a rampart, and encircling fosse,
They first beheld. Domes of capacious frame,
And height unequall'd, fill'd the fence within.
Rough hides, the spoils of many a slaughter'd foe;
Wolves, foxes, boars, and prey of gentler kind,
O'erspread the roofs, and form'd their sole defence
From showers rude rushing, or inclement skies.
What framed their sides, the rampart held unseen.

'Twas now the welcome hour, when spent with toil,
The savage people in their homes partook

The feast, and stretch'd on earth, supinely dosed,
Till eve recall'd them to the work of death,
With hearts unsated, and destructive hands.
Hence, nought annoy'd the warriours in their search:
For now the noise subsiding to a calm,
The youths approach'd, tho' yet with wary step,
And mark'd with prying eyes what rose in view.

AROUND the fortress, spread a spacious field,
Clear'd of its wood; but o'er its smooth expanse,
No swelling ridge, or furrows, tho' defaced,
Announc'd old culture, or the ploughman's song;
Nor rose, nor violet dropping balmy dew,
O'erspread the plain; but bones, and smoking gore
Reveal'd a barbarous rout. Confusedly thrown
In heaps, the spoils of beasts, their constant dread,
Lay scatter'd loosely o'er the region:—here
A carcase half devour'd, and there a head,
With tusks still grinning, and extended jaws.

SILENT and unobserved, the warriour chiefs
Explored the fence at hand. The rampart's height,
Not without wonder seen, a while engaged
Their thoughts; the fosse of wide extent, and depth
Immense, they measured with their sight, and judged
From all, what people fill'd the space within.
No part half-finish'd, or decay'd, exposed
Access to strong assault, save where the stream
Form'd for the void behind, a watery mound:

For thence they dreaded less th' approach of foes,
That, ravenous, held their nightly walk around,
In quest of prey; or from invading hosts,
A sudden onset. Such the works appear'd.

When now the pair had left unsought no path,
Nor covert unexplored; the Athenian Prince
Bespoke Albanus, as he eyed the domes
With heed, that lined the river's farther side,
Unmindful of return. 'Friend,' thus he said,
'We tempt our fate, while ling'ring, on the verge
'Of ruin, if descried from yonder towers;
'Nought but the foes within remain unseen:
'And these, the spoils profusely cast abróad,
'Proclaim a savage people, yet unskill'd
'In arts, though high in stature, and of force
'Unmatch'd. The sun, already far declined,
'Recalls us to the host.' While yet he spoke,
He turn'd, and with his young companion pass'd
The plain with speed; then plunging in the wood,
Held forward to his friends an open way.

Meanwhile the Giant's train amid the cave
Lay screen'd: himself along the wider path
Moved, looking round; but thence descried no arms,
Nor hostile clamour met his ear. He strode
Still onward, and approach'd the woodland's verge:
When lo! the host of Brutus, spreading far
O'er the wide prospect, now exposed to view

Stood full in sight; and in amazement held
His senses lock'd a moment! Blazing shields
He mark'd, and countless numbers, all employ'd,
As in a city raised by magic power,
In works of general use, or deeds of war;
Tents ranged in equal rows, where art display'd
Her skill; the helm far-beaming, and the mail
Turn'd to the sun's broad orb; the gleam of swords
Waved as in triumph;—all announced a foe,
Prepared for battle, if opposed. The Chief
Shrunk back, while yet he eyed them, and escaped
Unknown, behind a spreading ash secure.

Long, with a heedful eye, the savage scann'd
The throng before him; pondering on the means
To counteract their might: but while he mused,
The tread of feet behind him, and the sound
Of arms, assail'd his ear. At once he mark'd
The Trojan bands returning, and to these
Stood full disclosed! With wonder all beheld
Forms new to sight; and staid in speechless gaze.

As on fierce wolves, encroaching on his walk,
The surly mastiff glares, shaking his front
In ire, but dreading to assault the throng,
Growling he stands, and terrible, but sees
His foes advancing, and retires: thus stood
The giant terror-struck, and with slow steps,
Veiling beneath the semblance of disdain,

Or cold neglect, his flight; retreating, drew
The friends to follow, urged by keen desire.
ALBANUS first beheld him thro' the wood
Yet dimly seen; and pointing, show'd the form,
As of some Godhead, to his mates. At first
They moved with reverence on, but soon discern'd
One of the giant race, and wish'd to seize
By arms, or dextrous art, th' expected prize,
Yet with no hostile or deceitful end.
Hence, when he view'd them with indignant eye,
Or threatening turn'd, the troop pursued his step
With hasty tread, or spreading in their course,
Essay'd to hold him, closed as in an orb.
In vain! He kept his path, till raising high
At last his hand, and shouting in a voice
That shook the wilderness afar; his mates
All rush'd to sight horrific from the cave,
Tossing their clubs aloft with deafening roar.
As when, on Zara's rapid tide, that sweeps
Thy plains, Metamba, and the spicy vales
Of Kongo's sunny clime; some vessel fraught
For commerce, toils against the eddying stream;
Just when the port of Salvador unfolds
A welcome refuge, seen with wishful eyes;
Known from the skiff that plies to reach the land,
The shark wild-flouncing, or the crocodile
Stretch wide their cavern'd throats to gorge the crowd,

Darkening the shores around: the crew aghast,
Hang on the edge of ruin, and collect
Their force to combat, or retire;—not less
The Trojans with surprize and dread beheld
The ruthless foes, in might superiour far:
They stopt, and meeting, as the wood gave scope
In one compacted line, raised high their shields,
And shook their javelins, for defence prepared,
Not for assault. The cautious leaders check'd
Their fire, observant of the Monarch's rule.
MEANWHILE, stern Vortiger impell'd his own
To deeds of death.—'Haste, let us seize the band
'Entire, ere from their camp the numbers pour
'To give them rescue;—Is your courage fled,
'Ye warriours!' (taunting thus, he call'd aloud
With scornful gesture;) 'but of late so fierce,
'And violent, as it seem'd? Your shields are vain
'To ward our weapons.—Yield, ere yet our hands
'Scatter your limbs in air!'—Shouting, he swung
An iron mass around him, and discharged
The ruin with tempestuous force. It held
Its course, and slanting on Albanus' shield,
Obliquely, plough'd the soil. The youth incensed
Sprung forward, waving in his better hand,
A pointed javelin. As the bird of Jove
Prone-dropping from his height, to seize a fawn;
With whizzing wing, and keen eye darting flame;

He came. The weapon sung at once in air,
With force dismiss'd; but wary Vortiger
Recoiling shunn'd the death. Strong Urion's breast
Receiv'd the point, that thro' the wolf's rough hides
Deep-piercing, reach'd the seat of breath. He reel'd,
Then staggering grasp'd his nearest mate, and writhed
His sinewy throat in death. So, mid the wood,
An oak, whose spreading boughs had mock'd the rage
Of many a tempest; when the thunder rives
Its trunk, or whirlwinds tear it from the field,
Bows to the storm, and rolling from its height,
Shakes half the groaning forest in its fall.

And now, his lance regain'd, the hardy pair
Explore a safe retreat; for yet the foe
Stood unsubdued, though wondering at a deed
So bold; and ready to collect their powers.
Hence to the camp the Trojans held their rout,
Not unmolested, tho' th' approaching night
And wood's dark umbrage held the cohort screen'd.
Fierce, on their step enraged and yelling, rush'd
The giant with his tribe, unlicensed, fell,
And of restraint disdainful. Far around
Was heard their dreadful shout. The camp was roused;
The watchmen spread alarm; the prudent Chief,
Prescient of ill, had held a force prepared
To bring relief in peril's last extreme.
Stern Camber took the lead, and raised his voice

In thunder o'er the echoing vales. 'To arms!'
He cried,—and instant through the shade pursued
The sounds he heard, and forms, though dimly seen,
Of warriours dire in aspect. Vortiger
Beheld his fiercest in their mid career
Appall'd: They mark'd innumerable lights
Spread o'er the camp, and stood like bears, subdued
By blows and hunger, to their masters rule.

AGAIN the Leader o'er his own resumed
Command; for in the crowd his single voice
At first was spent in air. He bade with speed
To seek their mates, and leave to better hours
The vengeance now delay'd. 'With morn,' he cried,
'Gerontes and his powers shall sweep from earth
'Yon tribes, though numerous as the flies that swarm
'On carcases half-wasted, that bestrew
'The paths that wind to yonder fort. But now,
'Tis fit we make retreat.' He spoke, and sought
With hasty strides the woodland. Close behind,
Dismay'd, and humbled, his associates fled.
The Chiefs of Brutus join'd their native friends
With joyful hearts; and night o'erspread the scene.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK VI.—

THE ARGUMENT.

The Adventure of the preceding book having been related to BRUTUS, he prepares for an engagement. The Giants hold his host in alarm, but do not make their appearance until the day is far spent; having followed the advice of VORTIGER, not to engage in action without the expected assistance of ANDROGEUS, and of his ALBIANS. The pride and impetuous courage of ROMERUS, at last bring on a battle, in which LOCRINUS makes a principal figure. By his personal efforts, GERONTES and his followers are routed in one part of the field. But in the mean time ROMERUS, opposed in vain by CAMBER, makes a great impression upon the host of BRUTUS, in another quarter. In the midst of his exultation, he hears sounds of dismay; is surrounded by his vanquished companions; and beholding, without being able to encounter LOCRINUS, is borne irresistibly into the forest, where the conquerors, at the approach of night, cease from their pursuit, and retire.

WHEN now the Leaders reach'd the camp secure,
They sought th' imperial tent, where Brutus call'd
His peers to council; all with anxious thought
Expectant sat, and unresolved; prepared

To hear what news the youthful heroes bore,
And what their cause of quick retreat. The pair
Approaching, claim'd the Monarch's patient ear;
When thus th' Athenian Prince address'd the throng:
'LORD of this host, and ye illustrious Chiefs,
'Prepare for fight! As ye have heard, the foe
'Is fierce, resentful, of superiour size,
'And strength unmatch'd; but void of arms, nor skill'd
'In war, if from their aspect we may form
'Conjecture; yet insidious, as we found,
'And ruthless in their rage. The talk of peace
'Would swell their pride, already, if I deem
'Aright, presumptuous in the height. We met
'One of their mightiest; for the Chieftain bore
'No common port.—He spoke not, but retired,
'Yet with indignant eye. We sought to seize
'The tower-like warriour, or to hold in parle
'With peaceful purpose; but the Gods who read
'All human thought, know whether minds averse
'Reveal'd our landing; or some straggling foe
'Beheld us unobserved; or chance produced
'Th' effect:—but while we kept him in his walk
'In sight, pursuing where he led the way;
'Sudden his yelling mates, like harpies, keen,
'And hunger-bitten, from a cavern rush'd
'Horrific, wielding maces in their hands
'Shapeless and rude, and tossing to the moon

'Their arms in madness, as defying Jove,
'And reckless of his ire!—We saw, and turn'd,
'Heedful of thy command, to shun the power
'Of giant warriours, nor provoke their rage.
'But pressing on our rear, their Leader hurl'd
'Full on Albanus' shield, a stony mass,
'Rent from the rock, enormous bulk! The youth
'Shrunk back, and shunn'd the death; then gave a loose
'To just resentment, and with fury sent
'His javelin on the rout. One felt the point
'In his fierce heart, and sinking, on the soil
'Dropt prone. I saw him writhe in death. The night
'Screen'd us, with speed retiring. Close behind
'The savage warriour with his herd pursued.
'The camp alarm'd them; from the clang of arms
'They fled, affrighted at th' unwonted sounds;
'Not tamed.—We saw their fortress, and survey'd
'With heed th' adjoining space, and come prepared
'To point, when just occasion calls, the paths
'Of easiest access, and the parts exposed
'To our assailing arms, should triumph crown
'Our labours in the war. Meantime, great Prince,
'The field awaits you, and the vengeful foe.'

THUS while Eugenius spoke, each hearer knew,
As dread, or manly spirit sway'd his thought,
Passions now first awaked in all their sway.
This grasp'd the faulchion, with a heart that swell'd

With hope of conquest; that, alive to fame,
Glow'd with the future fight, and at his feet
Beheld the barbarous monarch stretch'd in dust,
Too late repentant. Some, resentment fired
For Chiefs with scorn repulsed;—while secret dread
Inspired a few, and trembled in the heart
Unown'd. Great Brutus, scanning each event,
Thus spoke at last the purpose of his mind.

'Go, warriours, snatch the moments of repose.
'With morn we fight. Await the call to arms.—
'Meanwhile in safety rest: the task be mine
'To guard, amid the silence of the night,
'The camp from inroads, or assault.' He said,
And bade the Chiefs disperse. Each sought his tent,
Confiding in the monarch's watchful care
Long tried, and proved in many a dire extreme.

Ere yet young Alban with his friend retired,
He graced their glorious act with just applause:
Then sent them pleased, with honours and rewards
Conferr'd or promised, and including all
Beneath their rule, to rest. Such deeds approved
The Father of his host, not more revered
Than loved, the first of monarchs, and of men.

Thus they; while uproar in Gerontes' domes
And discord reign'd. Back with his stunn'd compeers
The giant, late so boastful, held his course,
Now humbled. Sudden, round their leader came

His mates in rude assembly, glaring wild,
Like lions ravish'd of their prey. They heard
What Vortiger announced, of Brutus' host,
Amazed, but not convinced; nor once believed
The tale of death; when to their eyes the proof
Appear'd;—the pair surcharged with Urion's corse,
Known by his features, and dishevell'd hair
In death horrific! In his breast they mark'd
The wound, deep-trench'd by Alban's forceful dart,
That reach'd the seat of life. The bearers cast,
Glad of release, the breathless carcase down,
Dread sight! an offering to the Gods of hell!
Of import dire, portending death and woe!

As when an eagle, scaling on the wing
The cliff's steep height, his seat of empire; bears
Th' expected morsel to his young, with toil
Raised on the winds; beholds his mangled brood
Scatter'd promiscuous on the rock, what time
He gains his royal aerie; round he sweeps
In many an airy wheel, and flings to earth
Th' untasted prize in madness; on the ground
Dashing his beak, he meditates the foe
In thought devour'd:—such fury fired the throng.
They thunder'd vengeful threats; yet with amaze
Dread mixt, and rage resentful, and the wish
Of crest-fall'n pride, and hope of full revenge.
Gnashing their teeth in anguish, as they gazed,

Their throats with howlings made the waste resound.
MEANTIME, their mightiest in the Monarch's hall
Convened, debated on the course that best
Beseem'd their state. All dissonant their plans,
And fierce their gestures. First Gargantius rose,
A Chief of mountain stature, uninformed
By aught but brutal passions, and the pride
Of strength superiour, and gigantic limbs.
His brawny arm high raised, he glared around
With withering eyes, and rageful thus began:
'WHY meet we thus in council, when the blood
'Already smoking on our soil, requires
'From every hand, revenge? An insect's sting
'Has pierced one mighty heart.—'Tis fit we crush
'The brood beneath our feet! Ye warriours, hear
'What Ocean's powerful God by me commands;
'Nor linger unresolved. The God enjoins,
'That hence we rush impetuous on the race
'In arms, and drive them headlong to the main,
'Ere morn awake. Myself, if ye decree
'An act thus vengeful, in your front, will spread
'The havock singly, and this arm disclose
'A path to others through their flying bands,
'Scattering their host by thousands.—Such resolves,
'Such deeds become our race. If ye approve
'This counsel, pour we dreadful on the field,
'In our own strength tremendous. Let the task

'Be mine to slaughter and o'erpower the foe.'
Thus while the boaster spoke, indignant ire
Inflamed Gerontes' heart; but stern disdain,
And anger sparkled in Romerus' eyes.
Ascance with scorn he mark'd him, and in few
Replied.—'To thee great Neptune's sovereign will
'Is yet unknown. The course thou bid'st pursue
'Is not inglorious. Yet I wish to meet
'My foes in sunshine, not to hide my deeds,
'As if ashamed, in darkness. Judge, ye Chiefs,
'What means the best avail to quell the foe.
'This hand, with other than Gargantius' force,
'When ye have fix'd your purpose, may assail
'Amid their host the mightiest. But let acts,
'Not vaunting words, approve us in the field.'
FROWNING he ceased. Nor discord spread her rule
Wider o'er chaos, ere th' Eternal gave
Its mass proportion, when innumerous forms,
The sport of meeting elements, engaged
Conflicting; than amid a lawless crowd
She held dominion. Clamour rose and noise,
Like Fiends in uproar on the gulph of fire.
These snatch'd their clubs, impatient for the fight,
And growling horrid joy; while those forbade
Ere morn to move, announcing instant fate
To all who disobey'd. Some to the trench
Flew wild; but by their furious mates repell'd

O'erpower'd and grumbling, measured back their way.
Say, Power Divine, what ruling spirit still'd
The rage of people, by no law restrain'd,
And scornful of controul? What voice reclaim'd
The sons of slaughter from the lust of blood,
And tamed their brutal appetite?—'Twas thine,
Deep-working Azrael! From the western shores,
Where by a well-feign'd tale the Demon roused
Androgeus with his Albians, to the aid
Of friends detested, now return'd, he mark'd
Their fierce contention, not unmoved. He cast
His eyes around, and sudden, in the form
Of Algar came, before Gerontes; bathed
In sweat, and breathing short, as one in haste,
And fraught with tidings. Far amid the waste
Old Algar fix'd his seat, and pass'd his days
(Though like the rest in manners as in size,)
In peace. Debarr'd from human kind, he glared
With wilder aspect than his mates inured
To social intercourse, and stood aghast
Amid his kind, like some perturbed ghost
Driven from his midnight haunt, and on the sun
Gazing with pale affrightment! While he eyed
Their concourse, trembling with amaze and dread
At once, the clamour ceased. Around him all
Came with inquiring looks. The Demon saw
Their silence, inly-pleased, and thus began:

Ye sons of Neptune, if I judge aright,
'Some tempest gathers in the west, to break
'With ruin on your heads, if your best powers
'Stem not its force. Know, while I trode the wild,
'With morn, as wont, and anxious sought my prey,
'A horseman fleet as whirlwinds cross'd my path,
'Who seem'd an Albian. (I the race beheld
'Once in my prime of days.) I ask'd what urged
'His flight. He stay'd not, but in passing named
'Arms and Androgeus: then with lightning speed
'Flew as on air from sight. I look'd abroad,
'Thus warn'd, and on the summit of the hills
'Saw forms of hostile semblance, as the men
'Of Albion, clad in coats of iron mould,
'If rightly I discern'd their distant files.
'I heard the murmur of their shouts, though far
'Remote; and this way deem the numbers bent.
'Ye have what brought me hither.' While he spoke,
He turn'd, as loathing converse with his race,
And sunk amid the shade. Now ceased the fray,
And all impatient fix'd on Vortiger
Their eyes, as skill'd to counsel and decide
Of each event. Then first elate of heart
He rose, and joyful thus address'd the throng:
'Some God, O Chiefs, some favouring God reveals
'In Algar's shape, that hither with an host
'Of Albion's bravest sons Androgeus comes;

'Else not a son of earth had reach'd this land
'From regions thus remote, to speak so soon
'Of their approach in arms. Ye then, beloved
'Of ocean's God, hear what the Power inspires!
'OUR foes alarm'd will pour their numbers forth
'With morn to battle. Though in strength they fail,
'To match our mightier race, their arms from ills
'Protect the feeble; and with courage swell
'Their hearts to meet our fiercest in the field;
'As the keen wolf, when hunted to his den,
'Turns on his rash pursuer. Hence my voice
'Dissuades immediate fight, till Albion arm'd
'March with Androgeus to the war. Even now,
'They leave their hills, and fly with sword and shield
'To cope with warriours like themselves in size,
'And arm'd as they for fight. With us allied,
'Lowering tremendous in their van, what force
'Can break so strong a battle, or repel
'Such powers united! Ere the troops arrive,
'I deem it, friends, the wisest course, to hold
'Their camp in dire alarm, but not assail
'With hostile inroad; while a few disclosed
'Attract their sight, and numbers shout behind
'As in approach, suspense and dread will quell
'Maturer counsel, else employ'd to form
'Close schemes, or urge to desperate deeds the bold.
'ALREADY morn approaches. If my voice

'Avail to guide your course, th' occasion calls
'For deeds. Let parties spread o'er all the woods
'To give alarm: some shouting wild, though screen'd
'Within the forest's depth, and some advanced
'Maintaining distant war. Our numbers thus
'Will seem increasing; and our foes appall'd
'Stand doubtful how to ward th' impending blow,
'Till fate consign them as our certain prey.'

He ceased, but ceasing, to the lawless rout
Restored not concord. In Romerus, pride
Disclaim'd the purpose, as implying dread,
Or built on mean distrust; while rage inflamed,
As wont, the Monarch's heart. Yet what he heard,
Of Powers divine, o'eraw'd him, and the view
Of Urion stretch'd in death.—He shook in ire
His locks; and yielding, yet displeased, replied:

'My spirit brooks not these delays, impell'd
'To chastise, by our own superiour might,
'This pigmy host. I seek not, nor refuse
'Androgeus' aid, but see with scorn his bands
'Of Albian warriours. Yet what Neptune wills,
'For other Power we dread not nor obey,
'Demands our reverence.—Brethren, let us cease
'One day from slaughter at the God's command.
'But hear, great Ruler of the stormy deep,
'Nor shew displeasure! Should this race remain
'Here fix'd, when Phœbus meets thee in the west

'Once more, whate'er Androgeus with his host
'May act;—no hand shall screen from instant fate
'Their lives devoted; not thine own!' He said,
And groaning from his heart, dismiss'd the throng,
Deeming the fight suspended. Thus he judged.
But Nature's Lord thus will'd not, nor design'd.

WHILE o'er the savage nation, rude misrule
Prevail'd, and discord;—in the strangers camp,
Brutus alone, and great Locrinus waked,
Of all the Chiefs. The cares of kingly rule
Held that employ'd; and this, the thirst of fame,
The thought of future glory, and a mind
Bent on ennobling deeds. What others knew
With dread, enkindled in that hero's soul
High thought and great attempt. On foes he mused
Of giant stature, ruthless as it seem'd
Of heart, and wild of aspect, with desire
To tame their barbarous pride;—for in himself
Secure, he reck'd not of their strength, and heard
With scornful mind their boast.—All night he roam'd
Along the camp, and in his mind arranged
Its thousands; eyeing oft the kindling east
That faintly blushing spoke th' approach of dawn.

MEANTIME long peals from every quarter spoke
The giants roused, and o'er the Trojan host
Spread fear. And now the glorious orb of day
Arose refulgent, when the trumpet call'd

The bands to war; and sudden, all the field
Blazed with terrific arms. Each leader strode
Before his troops; but far above the rest
Locrinus rising, took each warriour's eye.
* As when from Lucia, or the burning shores
Of Senegal, beheld amid the roar
Of Gambia's torrent, thro' the shades of night,
The mountain'd ocean gleams, and piled on high
A fiery pyramid o'ertops the woods
That darken all the coast; the stranger scared
Shrinks from the dire portent; thus terrible
To sight Locrinus flaming, as he moved,
Arranged the battle. Arms divinely framed,
That graced Æneas toiling in the van
Of many an host; the helm, and splendent mail
Now clad his great descendant. Brutus gave
To him the gift, from sire to son convey'd,
Through all the line; but ne'er till now employ'd
To shield a hero more renown'd. He tower'd
Amid the nations, as th' aspiring elm
Branching and tall o'erlooks th' encircling trees,
Spread wide around; and with his outstretch'd spear
Marshall'd the throng to fight. A God he seem'd,
Shot from th' Olympian height, such terror arm'd
His eyes; such majesty of port inform'd
Each act; such vigour braced his limbs; while all

* See Adanson's picturesque description of the setting Moon, in his Voyage to Senegal.

With transport eyed the Prince, and from his look
Caught instant meaning, ere he spoke. His Sire
Exulting, mark'd him with delighted heart;
Then mildly thus address'd him, while he gave
Command, to form, and lead the host to war.

'Thou seest, my son, what dangerous battle waits
'Our powers; and of the foe's superiour might,
'Whose shouts, even now, assail us from the wild,
'Hast heard:—to Thee I give the glorious charge
'Of all these thousands, tried in many a scene
'Of peril; but till now opposed alone
'To ardent warriours, like themselves in bulk,
'And stature; not to giant hosts, of force
'Immense, and dire of aspect, as of mind.

'To ward their onset, bid the Chiefs unite
'Their troops in close arrangement in the field,
'That shields compacted, or portended spears,
'May break the foe's assault, else from its weight
'Perhaps resistless.—Thou with caution lead
'The bands: thy deeds in arms are known to all.
'I, from yon summit that o'erlooks the vale,
'Will stand to mark the fortune of the day;
'To send relief where needful; or impell'd
'By fate, to bear, in danger as in power,
'A Monarch's part.' He said; nor aught replied
The Prince; but form'd, beneath the Leader's eye,
The throng that swell'd innumerous o'er the land:

As when the peopled hive, o'ercharged with swarms,
Close pent, expanding in the solar blaze,
Pours forth its busy myriads in the noon,
A living cloud, self-moved; the winged forms,
Wheeling in loose rotation, as amazed
And wondering at the scene, yet yield at once
Obedience to their Queen. She, in the van
Ascending, guides them in th' aerial tour,
To where the pendent willow, or the bough
Of poplar, courts them to its shade. The tribes
Descend, responsive to the sov'reign's voice,
And settling, blacken on the branch:—the camp
Thus swarm'd with numbers spreading o'er the vale;
And thus, obsequious to Locrinus' rule,
These stood in silence. Order rose at last
From tumult, and in lines arranged the whole.

Beside Locrinus, placed on either hand,
His brothers, emulous of noble deeds,
Came to the combat. Camber shook his spear,
Lowering defiance, as he led to war
The Trojan race: All on the hero fix'd
Their eyes, secure, behind his ample shield,
Of safety. Alban, glorying in his deed,
Advanced before the Larissean train,
Form'd on Locrinus' left. Two legions own'd
Each warriour's rule. Mycene's numerous sons,
Beneath Clitander, not in arms renown'd,

More, than for wisdom, and each gentler art,
Held on the right, with Troy's far-spreading host,
Their place. Adrastus, on the left, opposed;
And Lycia's host, the terrors of the field,
Megistheus in their front, were seen disposed
In deepening files. A warlike troop obey'd
Lysicles, from the Pontian realm, that sees
Euripus thundering o'er th' Ionian gulph
Impetuous. Those, with Lydia's gentler tribes,
Tho' weak, yet numerous, stood on either wing
Prepared. Their Chiefs, tho' far disjoin'd in fame,
Yet shone alike in arms. Laconia's sons,
With thine, imperial Athens! closed the lines
On each extreme. Beneath Onuphrius, moved
Before the host, the Melitenian race;
All bent, with slings and poniards, to assail
Alike the distant or approaching foe.

Close by great Brutus, on the height was seen
Evander, guarded by his native friends,
The Chiefs of Mitylenia, with a train
Of hardy warriours. These, with Trojans mix'd,
A chosen cohort, stood prepared to yield
Their ready service, whether call'd to join
The host o'erpower'd in battle, or repel
Th' exulting victor in his mid career.

While thus the Trojans flamed in shining arms,
Expectant of th' event, and on the wood

Bending their anxious eyes;—the giant force
Deep in its shade conceal'd, as erst advised
By him, their wisest, spread alarm around,
And held the Leaders in suspense. Their shouts
Now roll'd like thunder doubling on the winds,
Portending ruin in approach: Their forms,
Like meteors shooting o'er a troubled sky,
Moved dim along the woodland; terrible
Thus to imagination's vivid eye,
As more conceal'd from sight! On every side
The clamour swell'd alternate, yet no crowd,
Wild-rushing from the woods, provoked the war.

THUS, but short while, all stood in still suspense.
For now Romerus, by no Demon stirr'd,
But scornful of restraint, and inly raised
With native pride, before Gerontes came
Indignant. On the monarch and his peers
Fixing his eyes:—'What means,' he thus exclaim'd,
'This lingering, when yon host array'd for fight,
'Insult us, and defy! Here stay, ye Chiefs,
'If thus resolved; but ye, who know your force,
'And wish to sweep from earth this reptile herd,
'That dare to tread these interdicted shores,
'In hostile guise; Romerus calls you forth,
'To chasten arrogance!—Advance!' He said,
And roused in every breast its inborn fire.

THEY heard; and all with one consenting voice

Obey'd the call. Their monarch in the front,
No more by terror awed of Gods or men,
Shook his broad mace, and headlong rush'd to war,
Shouting.—The people gave him way. That hour
Avail'd not counsel. Vortiger pursued
Their rout, abash'd, unminded in the throng.
Already in his zenith flamed the sun
On heav'n's wide arch, when nearer peals proclaim'd
The foe at hand. And lo! the woodlands give
Their dire inhabitants to sight! A crew
In form, in act, horrific; in attire,
Shagged and rude; in stature, arms, and power,
Beyond the feebler race of man, unaw'd
By thunder; wielding rocks, came dreadful on
At once, inspiring dread, amaze, despair,
Madding! A force they seem'd, in number great,
In strength beyond compare!——

Wild in their gloomy van Gerontes strode,
Fit sovereign of the race! His mighty breast,
Rough with the hides that cased in triple folds
A[illegible]nt form, spread, as a mound, that bears
The shock of armies, unimpair'd. His head
O'ertopp'd the bands around him, and with arm
Of force immense, wielding the knotted oak,
With fell eyes, glaring thro' his ragged hair,
He seem'd some direful minister of Fate
Fulfilling heav'n's decrees! Romerus fill'd

A distant place, opposing on the right
Thy Chief, Mycene! yet he gave a while
The monarch way, resolved, when danger call'd,
To break like Jove in thunder from the line.
ASKANCE on Alban, Vortiger, abash'd,
Gazed sullen, groaning as he view'd the past,
Or scann'd in boding thought the future scenes.
A throng observant of his rule, so far
As here observance reign'd, pursued his step,
Glorying to act whate'er his voice enjoin'd.
He, staying in their mid career his mates,
When now the Trojan army stood disclosed,
Alone repell'd their rage. Leontia brought
An Amazonian cohort, rudely arm'd
With bows. The Lydian bands, to these opposed,
Show'd like a landscape opened to the blast
That sweeps Siberia's desart. Far behind
The nameless number spread, of power unmatch'd,
But void of discipline or thought. His arms
Each, as beseem'd him best, at random seized;
The shagged stone, or oaken mass, or root
Torn from the soil, the solid bulk unshaped,
Enormous fragment; or what else the wide
And pathless wilderness display'd of store,
They shook, in aspect threatening, Nor the hope
Remain'd, of seeing these amid the fight
At last exhausted; for the younger tribes

Stood near to heap the ruin on the field.
Now full in sight, each host a moment staid,
In wonder fix'd; for each beheld a foe
Alike remote in gesture, as in arms,
From aught of former times survey'd. In these,
The giant shapes surprised; in those, the files
Close ranged, the seemly yet determin'd face
Of opposition, or offence.—Aloft,
Meanwhile the Genius of the Isle beheld,
From the rude summit of the cliff, the scenes
Beneath, attentive. On her spear she lean'd,
And eyed th' embattled host with fixt regard,
Awing th' infernal race, who shrunk abash'd
From her keen glance, nor raised the sounding shield.
High on the midway air Azazel tower'd,
(Dread minister of vengeance—heav'n-empower'd
To scourge by war a fierce imperious race;)
Hovering, on wings that darken'd as they waved
The radiant orb of day. In his right hand
He held the thundering clarion, whose strong voice
Impells to fight, and kindles headlong rage.
Such was the scene, when first Locrinus strode,
Stern in the gloomy van. The plumes o'ercast
His helm blue-flaming; and his form divine
Seem'd like thy son, Alcmena, when in arms
He moved, and planning mighty deeds, aspired
In ardent hope, to emulate his sire.

Recoiling sudden as he came, the foe
Appall'd beheld him. Some superiour mind
They deem'd on earth descending to confound
All mortal pride.—Yet resolute they stood;
Ire drove them heedless on, and undismay'd
In show, return'd the trumpet's angry blast,
In sounds that shook the wolf's far-distant den.

As when a troop of wandering Arabs scour
Th' inhospitable wastes, or, from the height
Of Gebel-arad, eye the regions round,
Watching the traveller's approach; behold
From Mecca's towers a wealthy caravan
To Dhafar journeying, or the sea-beat shores
Of Babelmandel:—lured with lust of gain,
Prone from their watch, the shouting bands descend;
Deeming in thought, the camels, and the spoil
Already seized:—not less intent the foe
Rush'd headlong to the fight.—Before them flew
The rocks with fury thrown, that backward drove
The Melitenian troop; the stony shower,
That spreading darkness in its fall, portends
Sure ruin imminent. But to their force
The Trojan host opposed compacted shields,
And unremoved withstood their utmost power.

When now Locrinus saw his mighty foes
Full on the plain exposed, and mark'd the wood
Behind them far; disdainful of defence,

He bade his host descend. And lo! the bands
Moved in the pomp of light! The glorious Prince
Refulgent, in the horrid front, began
The work of death.—Say, thou whose glance explores
The forms of dim futurity, with-held
From mortal sight, Indulgent Power, declare,
Whom first the hero, whose illustrious line
Still rules Britannia's Isle, o'erpower'd in fight,
What chiefs opposed him, and what conquests crown'd!
'Twas Medon's luckless chance to meet his arm
The first. Attendant on Gerontes' side,
He fought; and emulous of strength, aspired
To equal deeds. Confiding in his bulk,
And keen, before the rest to signalize
His force, he met Locrinus on the plain,
And dared him to the fight. The Prince with scorn
Beheld him, pausing in his midway course.
No words ensued. The giant raised aloft
The ponderous rock, and swinging round, discharged
The weight with powerful arm. In act he tower'd
Tall, fierce, horrific; yet amazement held
His wild eye fix'd, when on the shield he saw
His foe receive the thundering mass, and bear
The shock unyielding. Instant fate appall'd
His heart, when now the hero waved his spear,
Prepared to strike. His eyes, his shining arms,
His port, and vigorous hand, wielding with ease

The weapon; all o'erpower'd him; and he stood
Aghast, till thro' his open chest the point
Plough'd its deep track.—He sunk to rise no more.
As down the hills of Abyssinia, burst,
Torrents that swell the Nile's prolific tide,
What time the humid atmosphere descends
In floods; Locrinus thus impetuous swept
The field before him. Through the side transfix'd,
Prone fell the bulk of Harpagus: his friend
Dorastes maim'd, yet 'scaping just with life,
Fled howling to the woodland. Radnor next
And towering Ormus felt his hand. The pair
Join'd, with united powers to stop the foe
In his dire course. But what avails in fight
Rude strength, opposed to force with skill combined,
Or forms of giant size, in vesture clad
Horrid to sight alone, or arm'd with rocks,
When to their breast the ready jav'lin flies,
Or sword assails them, by the brave impell'd
With ardor to its mark? That on the field
Lay panting, while the hero's thirsty sword
In his torn liver sunk; while thro' the back
This felt the dart that stretch'd him on the soil.
Meántime the Monarch madding, as he view'd
The scene of slaughter, left the Dardan bands
By terror half-subdued, and from his eyes
His voice, his mace recoiling, and enraged,

Rush'd on the Chief precipitate: The Chief
Turn'd from his work, and undismay'd, beheld
The giant sovereign, by his stature known,
His dire attendants, and superiour port,
Horrific in approach. He raised the shield,
An orb expanded in his front, and shook,
To match Gerontes' oak, the fatal spear,
Blood-dropping. Terror, as he eyed him, seized
The griesly King. As from the lion's eye
The tiger glutted with inferiour prey
Shrinks back affrighted; thus Gerontes shrunk,
Thus would have fled; but shame forbade the thought,
And pride, the dastard's last resource.—He stood,
Though awed, and with his words provoked the war.

'WHENCE com'st thou,' (thus he spoke), to meet in (arms,
'With pigmy hosts, a race unmatch'd in might;
'Nor by the thunders of thy boasted Jove
'To be subdued? Thine aspect breathes of war,
'Thy deeds of prowess. Bid thy people yield,
'Ere yet we feast the hungry throngs that howl
'In yonder forest, with their blood. Our hands
'May yet desist from slaughter, if disarm'd
'By supplication: certain ruin else
'And death await to seize, and tear their prey.'

To him Locrinus. 'What or whence thou art
'Imports not. Know, we come from distant shores,
'By heav'n commission'd and convey'd. That here

'We meet those numbers thus in hostile guise,
'Impute to him, who first assail'd a few
'With peaceful purpose sent; and by his deeds
'Provoked to warlike acts. Thy threats are vain.
'Thy hand we dread not, nor behold appall'd
'Thy race. We hear with scorn thy fierce command.
'Be thine submissive pray'r, and ours, renown.'

Thus he. Resentment and desire of fame
O'erpower'd his better thought, and gave his voice
To hurl defiance thus, and urge to war.

Now had the monarch, by Locrinus' sword
Been stretch'd on earth, and one eventful hour
Had seen the flames of discord raised, and quench'd
In night. But, watchful of his charge, the fiend
Impell'd a mighty Leader to intrude
Between the combatants, and turn his rage
From mortal deeds. Gargantius, while he mark'd
The hostile pair, o'er pale Gerontes saw
Dire ruin hanging imminent. He saw,
And though no warriour of the Dardan host
Had yet opposed him singly; and the ranks
Were thinn'd around him, yet he shrunk aside,
As from some mind superiour, while he scann'd
The Trojan Prince in arms. Him, thus alarm'd,
And ceasing sudden in his mid career,
The Demon view'd; and in his fierce heart stirr'd
At once the working passions into flame.

He roused fierce anger there, and thirst of blood,
And strong desire, by strenuous deeds, to prove
His boast fulfill'd. Thus urged, the giant broke
Through crowds, and held betwixt the meeting foes
A target coarsely framed, an orb immense,
Of pliant twigs compacted, and with skins
Fenced from assault; and wielding his broad mace
With arm of power resistless, as it seem'd,
Swinging the mass in air, he look'd the match
Of Gods, while fire shot from his kindling eyes.
As, from the cloud that intercepts his rays
A moment, bursts the world-reviving sun
With splendour unimpair'd; Locrinus first
Surprized, thus soon resumed his erring thoughts,
And stood collected. 'From declining age
'I turn my sword well-pleased.' He said, and sprung
Light forward. Striking on Gargantius' front
His shield, while yet the giant held his hand
Aloft with fell intent; the gushing blood
Confess'd his force. Locrinus saw the foe
Reeling with dizzy sight. Yet prone descends
The thundering mace; but slanting in its fall,
And robb'd of half its power, it stood in earth
Deep-sunk: then rising in his might, the Chief
On his stunn'd foe, while staggering, rush'd amain,
Quick as the winged wind. Again he swept
The slighter targe aside, and dash'd the shield

Full on his breast; then following with his arm
The charge, stopt short. And lo! the boaster dropt
Supine before him; as a tower that yields
To the wild whirlwind, bowing its proud head,
He fell. Gerontes with his crew recoil'd:
Fear froze each heart. In vain the hell-born fiend,
With his own fury swell'd the monarch's breast;
Dread quench'd the flame. He eyed the man divine
Sublime, and blazing as the star that flames
On heav'n's dark concave, scattering pests. He saw,
And turning, shunn'd his arm. The warriour plunged
Deep in Gargantius' heart the fatal sword,
Then call'd his Dardans forth, and clear'd at once
The path to conquest. All before him fled,
As from some Godhead dealing fate around.

MEANWHILE, Romerus on the right, opposed
To high Mycene's Prince, maintain'd the fight
With matchless strength. A while he stood conceal'd,
Watching the turns of war, and now beheld
Thy helm, bold Camber, and Clitander's spear,
Amid each perilous scene afar descried.
He saw his fellows oft assailing troops
Who stood united, and repell'd their force,
Mocking their idle efforts; while the Chiefs,
Still pressing onward, held one steady course,
Around them spreading rout and dark dismay.
He saw, and swelling now with mingled ire,

And indignation, strode before the throng.

As when on heav'n's illimitable void,
Pure space, a cloud arising, shades in mist
The mountain's summit, and portentous rests
On its bleak brow, till by the gathering winds
Borne wide, and spreading as its fuel'd store
Distends; in general dark involves at last
The vault of air; while on its utmost verge
Stands some tremendous minister, and peals
To man th' imperial mandate of the skies:
Such seem'd Romerus!—Dreadful, in the front
He came, o'erawing either host! His left
Before his broad breast held an orb immense,
Tho' rude, that bore the semblance of a shield:
While in his right, he swept th' enormous ash
Around; as deeming with one stroke to crush
The host's collected might, o'erbearing all.

At once unnumber'd javelins sought the foe
In vain!—Each wish'd to whelm him; but thy breast,
Intrepid Camber, felt a hero's ire.

O'er great Dorastes, stretch'd beneath his arm
On earth, the warriour lean'd; and drew the dart
Yet warm, and reeking, from his throat; when shouts
Spoke some new foes approach. He raised his eyes,
And saw the giant driving with his mace
The Trojan bands before him. Dreadless stood
The Prince, yet wondering, while he eyed the shape;

Tall, spreading, eminent, that scour'd the field
With desolating hand.—Not pausing long,
Nor unresolv'd he linger'd. 'Shall the son
'Of Brutus,' (thus apart the hero spoke)
'Yield to that ruthless savage? Shall I leave
'The plain inglorious, and in arms retire
'From that defenceless herd? Forbid it Fame,
'Pride, Honour, Ancestry!' He said, and met
The giant Champion. Ceasing from his toil,
Amidst a slaughter'd heap Romerus staid
His course, and resting on his mace, beheld
With cool yet steady mind, his foe's approach,
Within himself collected, and secure.

And now the Trojan, shaking as he came
A javelin wing'd for flight, with speed advanced;
And breathing stern defiance, had assail'd,
Perhaps had tamed, his rival. But the time
Forbade their onset. As they stood prepared
For combat;—sounds of loud acclaim were heard,
Raised by the central bands, and darting far
Along the nations on the left arranged,
Now as it seem'd advancing. While they look'd
Intent, Gerontes with his routed crew
There, flying, spread affright; while in the rear
Locrinus rush'd with his victorious train,
Urging the scattering throng, and breathing war.

Far in the West the verging sun declined,

Now faintly glimmer'd, when Romerus turn'd
Indignant from the fight, and wondering, saw
The shifting scene. Locrinus met his sight
Like Hesper spreading light, amid the stars
That sparkle in his train. Amid the roar
Of thundering hosts he blazed, a baleful form,
With fate's own ægis arm'd, that froze the heart
Where'er he moved, unnerving every foe.
YET not even he had awed Romerus' soul
To tame submission, or withheld his hand;
But borne by numbers from the field, he felt
All opposition vain. Even in the hour
Of hope, when all before him sunk at once,
He saw the battle swerve; he saw the throng
That bore him struggling to the woods. His friends
Dispersed, while Camber, with Mycene's Chief,
And stern Megistheus, thunder'd close behind.
At last the forest in its shade conceal'd
The crowd, so boastful late. The conquering host,
Recall'd by Brutus, ere they reach'd its bound,
Ceased from the pursuit, and exulting wish'd
For morn, to finish and reward their toil.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK VII.—

THE ARGUMENT.

The drooping spirit of GERONTES and his followers is re-animated by the arrival of ANDROGEUS with the forces of ALBION. In the morning, that Chief draws out his troops to battle; with a secret purpose however of coming, if possible, to terms of accommodation. While, with this intention, he calls forth LOCRINUS in the sight of both armies, to an interview; their conversation is prevented by the violence of the Chiefs on both sides, who, instigated by Demons, rush precipitately to battle. The two Leaders part with mutual distrust; and an engagement immediately ensues. LOCRINUS penetrates with a few followers into the midst of the ALBIANS, by whom he is surrounded on all sides. In the mean time, ANDROGEUS drives the DARDANS before him, but gives an example of generosity, by granting the life of PHRAORTES, a young man by whom he had been wounded, to the intercession of his Tutor. BRUTUS beholding the rout, descends from his eminence. The Guardian of the Island assuming a mortal form, marches before him. MOLOCH, instigated by rage, meets the celestial Spirit. A combat is carried on between them, while both armies are held in suspense; with the event of which, ushering in the actions of BRUTUS, the book concludes.

WHILE thus the battle raged on Albion's plains,
Though various, yet with ardour unimpair'd
On either side; Androgeus, with his train
Of native Albians, on their hills awaked

To labours long disused, assumed the spear,
And sought in splendent arms the field of war.
VERSED but in rural pastimes, and the arts
Of peace, through many a year; and taught to view,
As life's worst ills, discordant rage, and fight;
The Leader call'd to combat, had declined
The charge, and pass'd amid his blissful vales
A life of quiet:—but he wish'd to know
What face the strangers bore, and whence arrived;
To learn their purpose, and intent; to join
In close alliance with a generous race,
If such they proved; humane, and skill'd in arts
That tame and civilize; as in the trade
Of war, that works the passions into flame.
Against Gerontes, and his mates, he hoped
To raise a barrier, thus allied; but kept
Deep in his inmost thought, this end conceal'd.
SUCH, when the subtle fiend in Gerion's form
Approach'd, and roused him to the Monarch's aid,
Was then Androgeus' aim. Not long he paused,
Nor seem'd suspended; but arising, gave
Command to arm in haste.—Their father's voice
His children heard obedient, and prepared
For battle. In Gerontes' cause they arm'd,
Tho' scorn'd, and hated: such their ardent zeal
To serve the man revered, and loved by all.
THE Albian rulers, in Androgeus' dome

By chance assembled, when the Fiend declared
His errand; soon convened the neighbouring Powers,
In warlike semblance wielding sword, and shield.
Attended thus, the Leader held his course
Instant to meet his brethren; for he fear'd
Delay, when action call'd him to the field,
As stirring inborn pride, and fixing hate
Too deeply to be quell'd. Hence, while he sought
Thus guarded, his fierce kind, he bade their Chiefs
Convey with speed the troops remotely placed,
To meet their friends on Albion's further shore.

ALL night, Androgeus held one equal tract
O'er many a varying scene, and thro' the day
Pursued his journey, gaining but by starts,
Short rest; and now the sun's broad orb, again
Sunk in the ocean; when Gerontes' domes
Stood glimmering thro' the shade. Sounds that announced
Rout and discomfiture, the warriours heard
Roll'd o'er the waste. They heard, and raised a shout
Of joy. The wilds re-echoed to their call.

MEANTIME, Gerontes with his dire compeers
Now met, and weighing their disastrous fate,
Indulged reproach and clamour, dissonant
Alike, in thought and action; when they caught
The sound of friends approaching, hope revived
At once in every heart, though pride repress'd
Her first glad voice. Androgeus now was known,

Girt with the sons of Albion, clad in arms;
And ardent in their Leader's cause, to use
Those arms in battle. In Gerontes' thought
Contending passions raged: with shame repulsed
In fight, he saw well-pleas'd th' approach of aid;
Yet scorn'd to speak his wants, and blush'd to own
What help his state required. Hence, from his mouth,
No murmur broke of censure, or of joy.
He chafed reluctant, as a steed subdued,
That pawing, champs the bit, and feels the rein
Indignant; curbing choler, and fierce ire.
Ere this, the clamour reach'd from every part
His ear, announcing now th' auxiliar bands
With their great Chief at hand. The monarch rose,
And hail'd Androgeus as he came, with pride
But ill suppress'd, and fury half subdued;
Though strong necessity that tames the fell,
Gave friend-like semblance. Yet he grasp'd his hand;
And greeting rough, in dubious phrase, began:

'Thou heardst, we war, Androgeus, with a weak
'But numerous host, like those thou deem'st thy friends,
'Thy masters rather; for their mail invests
'Thy limbs, thus guarded from th' assailing spear,
'And arms of pigmy foes. But come, for now
'Thy prompt obedience merits praise. Thou know'st
'What means avail to tame the bustling throng:
'And with auxiliars, like themselves in size,

'And like in power,' canst aid the mightier hands
'That, arm'd with native strength, prepare to spread
'The carnage, soaking yonder fields with gore.'
GLOOMY he said, and on the Albian host
Lower'd with retorted eye.—To him, the Chief,
With high demeanour, thus in few replied:
'WE wish not war; nor hither come to swell
'The tide of battle, if some powerful cause
'Prompt not at once, and justify the deeds
'Else shunn'd. These natives, uninform'd of aught,
'But that thou war'st, and summon'd to thine aid,
'Against assembled nations great in arms;
'Will ask what just offence provokes to rage,
'And dire contention, ere they lift the spear,
'And mix in combat. Know, 'twas I who call'd
'The people forth, not to be scorn'd, but prized;
''Tis mine to lead their battle, or recal
'Th' indignant Albians to their distant vales.'
To him Gerontes, half his fury quell'd
Half bursting from his foaming lips. He felt,
By sad experience taught, how vain their force
Without th' auxiliar bands.—'Gods! 'tis too much!
'Talkst *Thou* of *juſt* occasion; in thyself
'So great, and of a race superiour sprung?
'This unknown talk of *juſt*, and *right*, befits
'Thy weak associates, not thyself.—But know
'These reptiles brave us on our shores, and come,

'Fierce as the lawless tenants of the waste,
'To spoil the conquer'd region:—With the morn
'They come. Then question as thou mayst their Prince,
'And urge him now, if wisdom rule his deeds,
'To seek some other clime. If hence he move,
'Awed by our mandate, we permit his flight;
'He goes uninjured:—else destruction waits
'His whole devoted people.' Speaking thus,
He call'd Androgeus to the feast.—He heard,
Nor much replied, suspended in his thought
Of what to act, but shared with Albion's Chiefs
A simple meal; then sunk to short repose;
Resolved with morn to learn the cause of war.

But this unknown; o'er all the Trojan camp
Acclaim resounded; every busy tongue
Grew loud, and wanton in Locrinus' praise.
They deem'd the glorious Prince beloved of Jove;
And in the shadow of his shield, believed
Who moved, secure of conquest. Brutus graced
His deeds with just applause; and at his suit,
Consign'd once more the nations to his care:
Himself abstaining from the fight; though near
To guide each movement, and o'erlook the whole.

Not sooner nature gladdened in the ray
Of young Aurora, than the Trojan bands
Seized their bright arms, and on the field appear'd
Arranged, and calm, expectant of command.

Before th' extended line the Princes moved,
Each in his place; the people form'd behind;
Prepared alike to turn, attack, defend,
They stood, and wishful, eyed the woodland wild.
As when the blast that sweeps the burning sands
Of Sarra, or the Nubian waste; and whelms
Thy sons, proud Cairo, or the swarthy race
Of Abyssinian hills, remits its rage;
Awhile 'tis rest; and from the mingled heap
Of tents, and scatter'd bales, the caravan
Assumes its wonted aspect.—All is joy;
Not long. For lo! the rapid whirlwind comes
Again from Niger, or Zanfara, fraught
With triple ruin! Such the sounds that swell'd
Now from the forest's depth, announcing powers
Increased in number, as in force, at hand.
And now, far other than th' unseemly crew
Driv'n from the field, the Albian race appear'd;
An host terrific, led by Chiefs of fame!
Tell;—for thine eye, imperial Queen, beheld
Well-pleased the sons of Albion, though opposed
To those by thee upheld; what Princes led
The noble band, and met a conquering host,
So late the terror of indignant foes.
Say, what their reign, their lineage, and their rule?
First of the throng, great Segonax was seen
From Severn's bank; who held his antient seat,

Where huge Plynlymmon sees that infant stream
O'er many a vale meandering. Him, a tribe
Of manners simple, but renown'd in arms
Obey'd, that resolute of thought, and stern
Of aspect, moved in close and deep array,
Darkening the plain afar.—From Cluyd's vale,
Abractes led a bold, and hardy band,
Who down the steep hill chased the flying doe
With rapid feet; or on the summit, pierced
The soaring eagle in his height. A Chief
He seem'd, declining in the vale of years;
Yet bore a dauntless face, and brought his troops,
Five thousand hardy warriours, to the field.
His sons, fierce Dymas, and Leontes, stood
Attendant near him, and provoked the war.

THEE next, Caractacus, the Muse beholds
Roused by the lake, whence rapid Conway sweeps
In short but various maze; begirt with steeds
That on the sides of cloudy Snowdown, ranged
Free as the liberal air. Their riders shook
Three thousand faulchions. On the bounding car
Llewellyn stern, and strong Cadwalder came
Shouting defiance. But their Leader strode
O'er all pre-eminent, and raised in hope,
Already chased in thought the flying foe.

THESE tower'd in front. On either wing disposed,
The bands from Elwy, or the wood-crown'd bank

Of Tovy, with the numerous race, that spread
Along the margin of the western main,
Now moved to fight. From Mona's sacred isle,
A chosen legion came. Part, raised on steeds
Follow'd the mighty Ordovix, who held
O'er all superiour rule; while part, on foot,
Beneath Orontes pour'd along the field.
Of these the Leaders strode in radiant arms
Bright in the van, with spears and massy shields,
Matching the first in deeds; th' inferiour throng,
In corslets clad, and wielding in defence
The lighter target, moved for every turn
Of war prepared; with daggers, faulchions, swords
Promiscous arm'd, in deep and close array.

Such, when arranged, was Albion's warlike host,
As yet not all assembled, though each hour
Saw new supplies arriving, till the whole
Assumed a formidable face. Meanwhile,
In the black front Androgeus like a God
Came on; of giant stature, but unlike
In deeds, as counsels, to his old compeers.
With noble Segonax he trode the plain,
A chief for virtue famed, as great in arms,
And scann'd with heedful eye, th' unfolding scenes.

Beyond the line of Albians, stood disposed
The giant brood. There stern Romerus tower'd,
There fierce Leontia, circled with a crew

Of Amazonian dames with quivers stored,
And dire Gerontes raged.—To these opposed
Camber, with famed Clitander, and the Chief
Of Sparta, led their troops. Lysicles shone
In arms, with Pontus' warriours, while the throng
Of feebler Lydians closed th' extended lines.

Ere this, the Guardian of the sea-beat Isle
Prescient of future ills, had call'd at once,
From groves, and caverns dark, that hear afar
The torrent's roar; from grot, and haunted stream,
Whence, ere it whelm the fated wanderer, rolls
The wail presageful of his doom, that strikes
At eve the shepherd's ear; the Spirits ordain'd
To guard the region, or inclined to fix
Their peaceful mansion here. She spoke, and all
Came round. Zelohim held the foremost place,
By strength superiour mark'd, and port divine.
Him Astor follow'd, from the willow'd bank
Of Tamesis, where on his tranced sight,
Exploring future times, Augusta rose
In all her greatness, holding his rapt thought
In extacy. He saw with fix'd delight
The sovereigns of the Isle. Bold Dariel swept
The shores on rapid pinions, to the high
Command obsequious; nor with ardor less
Inspired, Icariel and Zeruiah came
In arms resplendent. All beneath their Queen

Stood ranged, with many a name renown'd above,
But hid from mortal ken. Enshrined on clouds
They hung, observant of the voice divine.
To these, the Power superiour gave command,
From hell's destructive inmates, to secure
The Trojan heroes in assault. 'Ye sons
'Of heav'n, go forth commission'd,' thus she said,
'And meet with confidence, the hell-born crew,
'Now planning ruinous deeds: nor dread to match
'In fight, their mightiest. Nature's powerful Lord
'Thus wills.' Submissive to her rule, the throng
O'erspread the plain, some with their ample shields
Screening the race they guarded, from the stroke
Of giants, else resistless; some unseen,
Rouzing the warriours ardour to a flame,
And waking scorn of death; while all beheld
With watchful care th' infernal race, prepared
To mar their plans in council, as in war.
Meanwhile, assistant Fiends to Azrael came
From hell's dread Lord: Azuriel, Moloch, bore
With Ramiel join'd, his mandates; all employ'd
To part Locrinus from the host, or crush,
Beneath the weight of numbers or of power,
The Chief with terror arm'd, and matchless sway.
All night they counsell'd: but th' etherial band
Hovering with wings resplendent, on the verge
Of Brutus' camp, and barring all approach;

Held them till morning unresolved.—They mark'd
The sons of Albion with no favouring eye;
Yet while they labour'd in Gerontes' cause,
Gave aid reluctant, to a race abhorr'd.
Hence, Moloch and Azuriel, with a tribe
Of fiends less eminent, assumed the care
Of Albion's host, while Azrael with his mates,
Whereer Locrinus trode, were bent to spread
The rage of fight, and leave untried no mean,
By force, or fraud, to work that Champion's fall.

Now stood each host with front to front opposed,
In lowering aspect, all on deathful deeds
Intent, save that Androgeus thought alone
Of peaceful league. Along the line, he cast
His eye, and instant mark'd the Man divine.
Not with superiour force prepared to seize
The Nemean lion, or the monster boar
Of Erymanthia; or the Hydra, dire
With double throat, thy son, Alcmena, came,
Nor seem'd more dreadful, when Eurysthenes
Fled back, affrighted at the Hero's eyes,
Than now Locrinus. From his armour flash'd
The comet's glare portentous; and his voice
Roll'd sounds that meeting armies heard appall'd.

As in the depth of Norway's gloomy woods
The traveller starts, when first the hungry wolf
Springs forth, or bear arrests him in his walk

Sudden, when yet unknown; Androgeus thus
A moment paused; yet soon restored to thought,
Resumed his purpose. Ere the battle join'd,
Lowering his spear, he took each warriour's eye,
Slow as he strode, and graceful from the line,
Inviting meek approach. Locrinus saw
His act, and conscious of its meaning, sought
Alone the midway space, then calm advanced;
Nor without wonder eyed th' approaching King.

THIS pass'd, while Brutus from his height beheld
The field, with Lesbia's ruler, widely famed,
Observant of the scenes. Each mark'd with joy
The stranger's mild demeanour, and their Prince,
In shape so like the savage race;—in arms,
And deeds so far disjoin'd. The monarch view'd
His godlike son, not less by prudence sway'd,
Than great in action; ceasing in his course,
And meeting, as it seem'd in peaceful guise,
The stranger Chief. He saw, and rising, deem'd
Himself to join their converse, and to learn
What call'd those spreading numbers to the plain.

THUS judged the Monarch; but heaven's awful Lord
Them will'd not peace; but gave the Fiends of hell
Power, else unequal, to prolong the war.

HENCE by permission from above, the crew
Inflamed Gerontes' heart; and waked to rage
His ruthless bands. On Camber, and his host

They burst at once precipitant, and howl'd
So loud, the rocks resounded to their roar.
First of a mighty race, Romerus moved
Tremendous to the fight. Nor Camber sought
To calm the rising tempest; but with ire,
Met ire, and hurling on the giant's ear
A fierce defiance, flung with force immense
His javelin at the foe: The weapon held
Its course unerring, but Romerus shunn'd
The point, that pierc'd behind him far, thy side,
Stern Vortiger, and drew the purple stream.
Just when the god-like Leaders met like friends;
Ere yet great Brutus, tho' prepared to leave
His place, descended; spread the dire alarm
Like thunder rolling from the right. Each heard
The noise, and dreading guile, indignant seized
His arms abrupt, by keener rage impell'd,
As in his hope deceived. Androgeus now
Call'd on the hosts of Albion. Albion's host
Obey'd, and instant in the Trojan's front
With darts came onwards, and portended spears.
Amid the shock of armies plunged in fight,
The Chiefs were parted. Phrenor, with a troop
Of Dardan warriours, gave Locrinus aid.
But ere the rest advanced, th' impetuous foes
Inclosed the Hero with their martial band,
As in an orb, and held him, from his own

Awhile by force disjoin'd. Environ'd thus
He whirl'd his sword, and toil'd in dubious war.
First in his gloomy front advanced the strength
Of noble Segonax. To heaven he raised
His eyes in prayer, and call'd superiour aid;
In vain! An arm like thunder rent his shield,
With brass refulgent, and investing gold.
Next in his panting breast, Alastor felt
The javelin quiver. From Plynlymmon's side
He came, a hunter long inured to chase
O'er the green vales, the nimble-footed doe.
Oft with his prize returning, had he seen
At eve, a playful, and delighted throng
Rush from the little hut, to clasp with joy
The Sire, the Husband. On the path that led
From this dear mansion, with presageful thought
One wishful look he casts, and 'plains no more.
Thee, Ferox, next the flying spear arrests,
Cleft through the front.—Elate the warriour came,
High on his chariot raised. No force he deem'd
Would match his own in battle, and advanced
With rapid haste. Locrinus met his sight
At last. He dropt with trembling hand the spear.
For to his eyes, ere yet in darkness closed,
Zelohim stood confess'd; a form sublime!
Before the Prince he moved, and wrapt his frame
In light celestial, spreading as he came

Effulgent in his front, the flaming shield!
He saw;—nor spoke; for on his head, the spear
Descending, hurl'd him headlong on the plain;
The parting spirit mix'd unseen in air.

As from thy height, Kupele! through the stone
In Tibet's sultry plains, impetuous bursts
Thy tide, proud Ganges, where Indostan drinks
The sun's invigorating rays; and sweeps
With torrent uproar to the main:—the Chief,
Thus breaking thro' the ranks of Albion, bore
Their powers before him. Phrenor at his side,
Fought with his hardy troop, and thinn'd the field.

Meantime, Androgeus now insensed, arose
In all his might, and held the Dardan race
From their great ruler far. Yet not in haste
He seem'd; nor flew impatient to the prize.
Calm, with considerate eyes he scann'd the war;
Unmoved when conquering, and when hosts assail'd;
Fix'd as the mountain's base. Evanthus first
And Phormius felt his steel: one through the throat
Transfix'd, lay panting on the soil; and one
Advancing, in his groin received the spear.
Stretch'd on the dust the warriours lay supine,
The kindred souls together sought the skies.

Eyeing their mighty foe, the Dardan host
Fell back affrighted. Polybus opposed
His arm in vain. He clear'd an open space

Around, and drove in heaps the scattering bands.
Behind him shouting rush'd his Albians, ranged
Beneath Abractes, and o'erspread the plain.
AMID the general rout, say, Power divine,
What Chief withstood the Conqueror in his course
Heav'n-taught, and venturous, turn'd the tide of war?
A YOUTH there was among the Dardan train
Of Lycian origin, Phraortes named,
Thy brother, great Megistheus, and consign'd
By old Peneleus, to thy watchful care.
WHILE yet, that hero on the right maintain'd
Against Gerontes' powers a dubious fight,
The youthful warriour left him, Iphitus
His guide, in vain dissuading; with desire
Inflamed, to emulate Locrinus' fame.
Hence mixing with the Dardan race, he saw
Androgeus' acts, while anger and revenge
Alternate, sway'd his thought. Apart he stood,
And secret, communed with his prompting mind.
'GODS! how that Leader towers! What strength in-
'His arm! how shrink the fiercest from his eye, (vests
'Nor dare to match his force! not greater seems
'Locrinus' self, though glorious, in the field.
'Ah! could this hand arrest him in his course,
'What honour crowns the deed! What songs to speak
'The victor's praise, the theme of every lyre,
'Await me!—Speed, imperial Jove, the dart!

I give it wing.'—He said, and sought the foe.
ERE this Androgeus through the ranks had clear'd
His path, and heap'd around him in his wrath
Full many a victim: for he deem'd the whole
A lawless race, and gave a loose to ire.
Else pity pleading in his heart, had turn'd
Aside the falling weapon. Now the camp
Stood full in sight, though with a chosen few,
The hardy Polybus still barr'd his way.
JUST while the Albian o'er Acanthus fallen
Bent low, to wrench the javelin from his side
That drank the vital blood; Phraortes' voice
Assail'd his ears. He cast his eyes around,
And saw the youth approach, and felt his lance
Fix'd in his shoulder, ere he raised the shield
To ward its point. A Spirit ruled its flight,
And wing'd its point impetuous to the goal.
ROUSED as a lion by the hunter's dart,
Pierced in his walk; the mighty Leader rose,
And gave to rage a moment. O'er the youth,
Dread-struck, and wondering at an act so bold,
He shook the spear, by vengeful thought inspired.
But Iphitus beheld, and when he mark'd
The fate suspended o'er his helpless charge,
Gave terror to the winds. He rush'd between
With frantic speed, and stay'd the lifted hand
With one bold arm, and stooping grasp'd his knees;

There fix'd; and suppliant in the dust, preferr'd
His humble suit, and ardent, thus began:
'O! yet if ever pity touch'd thy heart,
'And gave thy breast to feel a father's pangs,
'A father sunk by anguish, as with years;
'O! Spare him! spare the prop of helpless age!
'By me it supplicates!—'Twas I who urged
'His rash attempt; the youth is blameless; here
'Plant thy keen weapon, if it thirsts for blood;
'Thine be this forfeit life, but his be free!'
He ceased;—the silent eloquence of tears
Enforced his fervent pray'r. Androgeus view'd
The Sage relenting, and humane, replied:
'Depart unharm'd, with life, with freedom bless'd!
'I lift the sword in honourable war.
'But know, thou virtuous Chief, this calmer mind
'Disclaims revenge. In fight, a casual stroke
'May stretch in dust a father's only hope,
'Or bathe the mother, or the friend in tears;
'But from the deed when known, the feeling heart
'Recoils with horrour.—Thou, too rashly brave,
'Go hence untouch'd! Yet ere maturer age
'Stamp thee the man, forbear to meet the sword;
'Else of yon numbers some relentless hand,
'Romerus or Gerontes, in their rage,
'May rob thy parent of a hope so prized.'
Thus mild he spoke;—and ey'n the tribe that gazed

Around him wondering, (for the combat ceased
One anxious moment,) gave deserved acclaim.
THUS while the battle raged, great Brutus eyed
The field with penetrating glance. He mark'd
Romerus in his course, and view'd unmoved
The monarch's devious track; but anxious held
In sight Androgeus, with his Albian bands.
AS looks the lion, when he sees his young
Though keen with native fury, yet untried
In combat; coping with the bounding pard,
Till now unknown, that meets them, and assails
With deathful purpose. Thus the hero look'd,
What time the Dardans, disarray'd and pale,
Fled from Androgeus' spear. Nor long he gazed.
But weighing with cool thought th' unequal war,
Himself resolved to aid them on the plain.
Hence rising to the work, he call'd to arms
The band selected as his guards; where'er
He moved, who followed for each chance prepared;
A close battalion, like the cloud o'ercharged,
With storms, horrific in their march. He grasp'd
The spear; and now resolved to mix in fight,
In few bespoke the Mytelenian sage.
'THOU seest yon stranger's deeds; while far misled
'By heedless courage, or some adverse Gods,
'Locrinus leaves his charge.—I go to ward
'Their ruin from that strong and wasteful hand.

'Thou, while I meet the warriour, and perchance
'Restore the battle, mark with heedful eye
'The right, where Camber and Megistheus toil
'Against yon giant Chief, and with joint powers
'Obstruct his efforts.—What thy wisdom prompts
'Pursue: for favouring Jove to thee suggests
'Just thoughts, and aids each purpose of thy soul.'

He said; nor aught the full of days replied;
But yielding pleased assent, o'erlook'd the scene.

Meantime the Queen celestial, heav'n ordain'd
To guard the land from shore to shore, beheld,
From her empyrean height, whate'er occurr'd
Beneath; but on great Brutus, and his host,
Still fix'd her chief regard. She held o'eraw'd
Th' infernals else undaunted, and deterr'd
The crew from hell-bred violence, and rage
Destructive; for they shrunk before her glance;
And ceased their fury when she raised her spear.

As in his central sphere, the radiant orb
Of heaven beholds attendant worlds, that roll
Around him, basking in his noon-day blaze:
He, wrapt in splendor unapproach'd, nor scann'd
Even by the sight that drinks his fervid ray,
Looks from his height abroad, and sends to globes
That on the pure empyreal void revolve,
Beneath his parent eye, the wish'd supplies
Of light and genial warmth;—'twas thus the Power,

Though fix'd in her superiour sphere, inspired
The host through all its parts. The ministers,
Bent on her errands, held alive the war
O'er all. Unseen the busy numbers spread,
And steel'd the yielding heart, and trembling hand.

SUCH was her work, when now the godlike Chief
Descended to the plain. The Guardian Queen,
Who gave, to raise the monarch's deathless fame,
Short triumph to his foes; now in the van
Advanced: to mortal sight, a warriour cased
In blazing armour. As she trode the plain,
All look'd amazement! For her port divine
Spoke of th' ethereal race: a shape she seem'd
To wield the thunder; and her sword the flame
That withers human sight! Around, she breathed
A spirit heaven-inspired, that stirr'd the soul
To noble deeds, and gave the buoyant limbs
Light as on air to wanton. Keen desire
She raised of victory in all; the hope
That swells the heart; but on the Chief, bestow'd
A matchless grace, and power beyond control.

FIERCE Moloch mark'd her step, and though averse
To aid the sons of Albion, call'd in haste
His mate Azuriel.—'Go, impetuous,' thus
He spoke, 'assume my place, to guide the rage
'Of dire Gerontes to some happy end.
'Me other work requires, should heav'n again

'Harrow this front with thunder-bolts.' The fiend
Heard, and obsequious plunged amid the throng.
THOUGH back recoiling, as he eyed the Power
Divine; the hell-born Demon yet appear'd
In mortal shape, and near Androgeus stood
A form stupendous, breathing horrid war,
And striking terror with amaze in all!
Black were his arms, yet cast a livid glare
Around. His shield, impenetrable orb,
O'ershaded half the nations as he moved,
Bloating the flaming noon! Dim o'er his helm
Nodded the sable plumage! Fiery rays
Shot from his eyes, and flitting o'er his sword
The blue gleam trembled, as from sulphurous ore.
SUCH seem'd the stern Divinity, and held
The war suspended! Towering in the van
Of Albion's host, he waved his outstretch'd arm,
Pointing their onward course. The troops condensed
Behind him, moved in long-extended lines,
All, but the bands of Segonax, who held
Locrinus from the fight; though now dispersed
They sought the sheltering woodland, and the wild.
ERE this, the Dardans from their dread released,
And re-assembling, join'd the monarch's host,
Chear'd by his voice, and on the Guide divine
Bending their eyes with wonder, all advanced,
Now bent on mighty deeds, and deathless fame.

WHILE yet Androgeus, and the Trojan Chief
Approaching, stood opposed; the Demon met,
Betwixt each throng, the heaven-protected Power.
Though inly shrinking, yet to sight he bore
A dauntless face, and by the human kind
Unheard, with bold demeanour thus began.

'THINKST thou, imperial Queen, beneath a form
'Assumed, to shun observance? Know, this eye
'That on these naked cliffs has traced thy step,
'Along the margin of the roaring main,
'Even now beholds thee through that martial veil.
'I know thee great in arms, of power to rouze
'In fight the raging elements, or snatch
'From yon bright orb, the penetrating flame.
'But whence such mighty boon on these bestow'd,
'A feeble race? The Thunderer's high decree,
'Not to that reptile herd consigns the seat
'Of high dominion. Sure its greater sons
'Demand his first regard.—Yet, if resolved
'Not in our cause to combat; be thine aid
'Withheld: let native force decide the day:
'Even though yon Prince, (I know him) and his son
'Who stands unconquer'd yet, support their cause,
'I leave to fate the long-contested field.'

THE guileful Demon thus, and thus insensed,
And high-resenting, spoke the Guardian Power.

'NOR thee, ill-fated that exterior form

'Conceals. But whence, presumptuous, thy request
'To me preferr'd? Fly, ere the sword display'd
'Cleave thy unhallow'd front; and send thee maim'd,
'As erst the thunder, to the gulph of hell.'
To this the Fiend, with hell-born rage inspired:
'I scorn thy threats, and boast an arm, in fight
'Great as thine own;—if stronger, learn to dread
'Not slight the conquering.' As he said, he mix'd
In fight ineffable, tho' darkness veil'd
The scene from mortal eyes:—alone were heard
Sounds, as of fierce defiance, and the blast
That sweeps, when pent within an hollow vale,
And bears the forest on its wing.—The deep
Felt o'er its void th' encounter, and the hills
Shook on their base.—And now Britannia's Queen
Unsheath'd her sword amid the solar orb,
Drench'd deep, and streaming with its purest ray.
Th' Infernal mark'd his fate, and from its edge
Shrunk back in terror, dropt his borrow'd form
In haste, and shrieking wild, resumed his own.
As when two clouds, with elemental flame
Impregn'd, on heaven's aerial concave mix
In night portentous; and the solemn peal,
Slow-rolling o'er the void, proclaims their war
By dreadful intervals! while all beneath
Shakes at each blast, and mortals deem the Lord
Of Nature rising in his wrath:—such seem'd

To these the conflict!—Short, though dire. The Fiend
Wheel'd down the whirlwind loose, with flagging wing
Flew devious. Earth receiv'd him, and conceal'd,
Nor long the Power superiour deign'd to search
What cavern held her foe, nor stay'd to boast
Her easy conquest. To the scene of fight
Again she turn'd her course; and all intent
To work th' Eternal's high behests, restored
O'er heaven's illumin'd arch the golden day.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK VIII.—

THE ARGUMENT.

BRUTUS, by coolness and perseverance, obtains signal advantages over the ALBIANS, whose Leader ANDROGEUS wastes his force, under the influence of passion, with no great effect. The two Leaders meet: but before they engage, MEGISTHEUS (falsely informed of the death of PHRAORTES by the hand of ANDROGEUS,) assaults that Chief. But the combat is prevented by the interference of the young man himself, who relates the event mentioned in the preceding book, and reconciles the Combatants. In the mean time BRUTUS is called to the right, where ROMERUS, after having performed many great actions, at last kills CLITANDER the Prince of MYCENE, who had been left to oppose him. At the instant when all seems to be lost, LOCRINUS arrives from the pursuit of SEGONAX and his ALBIANS, conducted by the Guardian of the Island, and by the Angel ZELOHIM. ROMERUS, although somewhat daunted at his approach, engages with him in single combat; but is defeated, wounded, and saved with difficulty from death. Favoured by the Demon AZRAEL, he retires under the shade of night, with his followers into the wood.

WHEN now the combat of superiour Powers
Had ceased, and still suspense a moment held
Each host in wonder fix'd; (of Gods engaged.
In battle, dubious yet what arm prevail'd;)

The Guardian, shrouded in her native form
From mortal sight, in Brutus' heart inspired
New hope, and breathed an energy divine
In every Dardan breast. The monarch felt
Once more an youthful vigour in his frame,
That braced each steady nerve; his former deeds
Rose to his thought, and gave the glad presage
Of future conquest. Calm the Hero moved,
In aspect resolute, and to his foes
Struck dread; though yet they darken'd all the plain.

Nor fail'd the Chief of Albion, though he saw
The shifting scene, to rouse his legions else
Depress'd, and other aid withheld, to bear,
(In his own force confiding, and the hope
That chears an upright heart;) a port divine.

Fired with resentful ire, he dream'd of peace
No more, for passion, by resistance stirr'd,
O'erpower'd his better thought; he raised his voice
Loud as the trumpet's clangour o'er the plain:
The well-known voice his closing host obey'd,
And lowering stern defiance, though appall'd,
Seem'd to provoke the fight. Caractacus
There led his bands, with great Orontes leagued;
Like waves, the troops successive roll'd along.

Far o'er th' expanse of heav'n Azzazel pour'd
His blast. The nations heard, and rush'd to fight,
Inflamed with mutual rage. Man stood, to man

Opposed; and hand with strenuous hand engaged
In conflict fierce. Not with more fury spreads
O'er frozen Irtis, where the moon's full orb
Illumes the Saiga's gleaming horn, the wind
Impregn'd with ice, and scattering hail around;
Nor sweeping bursts o'er Tanais' rapid tide,
To whelm Siberia's wastes, with wilder wing,
When winter rides the tempest, than the roar
Of war along the meeting hosts. They closed
At once, while flying darts obscured the day.

When now Britannia's Power supreme beheld
The fight restored, and Brutus in the van
Of combat, ruling with strong hand the war;
Far o'er the plain she shot, intent to mark
Thy tread, Locrinus, and control the Fiends,
Whose wiles yet held him from his friends disjoin'd.
His course she scann'd observant, and o'erlook'd
The right, where dire Romerus swept the field
Unmatch'd in strength, and fierce Gerontes raged.
Smiling she mark'd their uproar, nor forbade
Their triumph, in the end resolved to grace
Her favour'd warriour with distinguish'd fame.
Nor fail'd her heedful eye with joy to view
Young Alban bright amid thy warlike sons,
Larissa! Spreading terrour with an arm
That spoke the rising Hero; nor thy deeds,
Eugenius, wise in action, as in words,

And voice persuasive as the Muse's song.
Each part alternate the celestial Power
Explored, and gave her ministers to shield,
Obsequious to her will, the Chiefs exposed
To peril imminent; or to rouse in all
A spirit bold to conquer, as to dare.
Meanwhile the Trojan Monarch, and the Prince
Of Albion's host, as various views inform'd
Each mind, by various deeds display'd their power.
Here, storm'd indignant anger in a breast,
With native virtue warm'd, that deem'd the foe
Ambitious, artful, cruel, bent to seize
By force another's right, and sternly hold
By arms, and lawless violence their claim;
There, temperate courage, cool, collected, firm,
O'erlook'd serene the ever-shifting forms
Of war; by just and comprehensive thought
Still in its course controlled. Androgeus hence,
Though as a whirlwind bursting on the shields
Opposed, yet gain'd, while passion swell'd his heart,
No lasting triumph. Many a foe subdued
Lay stretch'd in death before him; and the troops
From his awaken'd ire and arm recoil'd:
But though retreating oft, as oft the throng
Return'd; and while great Brutus led them on,
Advancing glorious in the van of fight,
They fear'd no rout, nor shunn'd the mightiest spear

He through the battle held one equal track
Before his following host, and swept the field.
No passion sway'd his thought, nor lure decoy'd
His eye; nor prize, though tempting, turn'd his course.
His word, his sign, the willing troops obey'd:
For these the Hero fought, and bade the weak,
Behind the covert of his ample shield,
Securely rest. Nor thirst of fame impell'd
One act; nor triumph raised his equal mind.
Still in his people's good he found his own:
With them in peace, he knew serene delight;
For them, h[illegible]under'd in the rage of war.

As o'er some victim when th' inferiour birds
Of prey assembling, hang with quivering wing
On air, enjoying, ere they seize their prize,
In thought the future feast: what time they hear
The hunter's horn no more, and stoop to gorge
The straying kid, or unprotected fawn;
Should then the royal eagle, wheeling high
On heaven's blue region in the solar blaze,
Be seen descending from his height: what dread
Then whirls them, where the thicket or the brake
Afford their shade? before the Monarch drove
The flying Albians: on their rear he hung,
And urged their flight, yet not to parts confined
His care, but sought whate'er required his aid.

Him thus advancing, and with conduct firm,

Securing final conquest to his own,
At last Androgeus mark'd, now from the fight
Return'd, with anger by repulse inflamed.
GRIEF, when he saw his numbers disarray'd,
(All but the troops still marching by his side,)
Prey'd on his mighty heart. He look'd around,
And lo! the triumphs of great Brutus' hand,
His friends expiring, or deceased, or driv'n
With scatter'd ensigns! By a line of slain
He traced the conqueror's path; and when survey'd
At hand, the carcases that strow'd the field
Beheld the features of some friend beloved,
Or Chief for virtue famed; or sire revered,
Unhappy father of a desolate,
And helpless offspring; then of aid deprived,
Even in the moment when his shield had turn'd
Aside the dart, or his preventing spear
Had saved the widow'd dame, or orphan's wail:
Thus lay Brigantes and Admenius low;
Taxiles sunk in dust; pale Dumnus raised,
Just as Androgeus pass'd, his death-stain'd eye;
And murmuring low with dying lips—'Avenge!'
Lay cold. Deep anguish touch'd the Leader's soul.
As on the waste of Lybia, stands alone
The tower-like Elephant, amid the rage
Of warring elements secure, and holds
In sight, though far, the spoiler of the herd;

Nor by the dusty cloud that wraps the sun,
Nor by the mountain'd sands around him spread
In ceaseless whirl, nor soil that from his tread
Shrinks back, diverges in his onward course,
As shaken or appall'd:—Androgeus thus
O'er slaughter'd heaps, and armed bands, that barr'd
His path to Brutus, kept, with stedfast aim,
The Monarch in his view. Nor Brutus shunn'd
The fight; but turning, met his great Compeer.
At once the wasteful battle ceased to rage:
All gazed intent, when Albion's mighty Lord
Indignant, thus, and looking scorn, began:

'SAY why, thou troubler of a peaceful race,
'In this lone region fix'd, and in thy trade
'Of blood unpractised; comest thou unprovoked
'Hither with armed hosts, and bring'st dismay,
'Till now unfelt, and ruin in thy train,
'To thousands bless'd so late?—Thy port bespeaks
'A kingly presence, by thine acts belied.
'KNOW thou of impious thought, who deemst in war
'All worth comprised; these, though disused to fight,
'Yet arm'd with native courage, will oppose
'A barrier to thy rage, not to be burst
'By force, though shaken in the first essay.
'Meanwhile I stand to guard them; and forbid
'Thy hand a farther waste. These stretch'd in dust
'Call on their Chief for vengeance; nor in vain

'Their voice. Yet, ere I lift the fatal spear,
'Declare thy name, thy lineage, and thine end.'
He said.—And now perhaps returning peace
Had join'd the nations; for the Trojan Prince
Prepared to tell what Power divine convey'd
His host, and what the cause unhoped of war!
But here unwelcome fate again forbade
A nearer intercourse, while for each host,
New toils stood ready by her stern decree.
Amid the race of Dardan warriours, famed
For every noble deed, one wretch appear'd,
Mean, and unworthy of a soldier's name;
Meges, for nought but shameless acts renown'd
Still prone to whisper ill; and when his words
Struck sorrow to the heart, with secret joy
Then brooding o'er its anguish. He beheld
The young Phraortes, when Androgeus' spear
Waved o'er him. Sudden from the scene he flew;
Th' event unseen, yet pleased to paint the whole
With added falsehood. On the right he mark'd
Megistheus, soil'd with honourable dust,
And mated with the first in glorious toils.
With speed the Messenger of ill approach'd,
As one aghast, and breathless, thus bespoke:
'Know, Prince, while here Thou bidst the battle rage,
'Thy brother lies in dust. I saw him fall
'Beneath yon stranger's sword.—If yet he breathes,

'Tis but to see thee, and expire.' He ceased,—
And pleased, in secret brooded o'er his tale.
GRIEF, as the Hero heard, o'erpower'd his heart,
And check'd his utterance. As the lion wheels,
What time, while growling o'er his prostrate prey,
Afar he hears portentous sounds that spread
Along the waste, from his forsaken den,
And deems the panther, or hyæna fell,
Gorging his helpless young:—the Lycian turn'd
Thus groaning. O'er the warriour's hoary cheek,
Wrung from his rough heart stray'd th' unbidden tear.
Not long it flow'd, his grief to fury changed
At last, and drove him headlong o'er the field.
As yet the mighty Leaders stood opposed;
And now the Trojan Prince began to speak
The cause of quarrel, when Megistheus came.
Rage swell'd his accents. 'Cease,' he cried, 'from war.
'Mine is this Chief, this murderer of the weak,
'The young in arms, this coward warriour, dyed
'With guiltless blood, more fit in savage wilds
'To fall the tyger's victim, than to cope
'With noble foes in fight.—Cease, ere this hand
'Avenge a brother's fate.' Enraged he spoke,
And on the Lord of Albion rush'd amain.
NOT more unconscious of imputed ill,
And in himself secure, the Roman stood,
What time, at midnight's solitary hour,

The spectre lower'd before him, strode in sight,
And threatening evil for some crime unknown,
Spoke of Philippi's field; nor heard his voice
(By virtue raised) with heart more unappall'd
By guilt, than now Androgeus. On the foe
He cast his eye indignant, and replied:
'RASH as thou art, this heart, unstain'd and pure,
'Disclaims thine insult, nor thy words provoke
'My wrath. Approach, and meet thy fate. This hand
'Nor seeks, nor shuns the combat.' As he spoke,
He spread before his breast the mighty shield,
An orb immense; and seem'd a match for Gods,
So high he tower'd, in port, in arms divine.
SUCH was the scene.—Great Brutus eyed the pair,
Suspended in his thought, and staid to mark
Th' event. The Lycian, steady to his task,
Now sprung impetuous on, and seem'd to dare
His mightier rival to the fight. He deign'd
No parle, but with a force inured to break
The thickest battle, waved his spear around
In act to strike. When lo! a warriour held
His arm! Surprised, he cast his eyes abroad,
And saw Phraortes. Smiling at his side,
Uninjured stood the youth, and press'd his hand;
Then to his brother, yet in wonder fix'd,
Rehearsed Androgeus' act; and bade him drop
The blood-stain'd weapon, or, if fury fired

His unrelenting soul, plunge in his heart
The point; and take the life that Chieftain spared.
As when the matron of imperial Rome
Heart-struck, when first the messenger announced
Of Thrasymene, that drank of Roman blood
In tides, with anguish speechless, deem'd her son
Fallen in the general wreck: while yet she sat
Dismay'd and panting, when her startled ear
Shrunk at each boding knock that shook the door,
Indulging images of woe; beheld
The youth rush sudden to her eager arms,
Alive, unharm'd.—Scarce higher transport touch'd
Her thought, than thine, Megistheus: (for beneath
The cloudy aspect lurk'd a generous mind;)
But pride suppress'd its influence; yet he lock'd
In his the stranger's hand, and thus in few.
'WHOE'ER thou art, to thee Megistheus owes
'A boundless debt; far higher fame, than crowns
'The hero's martial worth, thy deeds command.
'Accept a soldier's thanks; though few his words,
'Or weak, his voice applauds a generous act,
'His heart a virtuous deed, and feels its power.'
THUS he.—The God-like Albian then enjoy'd
Virtue's sublime reward, the calm delight
Of self-approving thought. He gave his hand,
The pledge of friendship. Now the time forbade
Their farther intercourse. All ceased from fight

Intent; and Albion's Ruler staid to hear,
Though to the west the setting sun declined,
What cause provoked the war. But tumult spread
Along the nations on the right disposed,
Announcing change. Th' imperial Leader left
Safe in Megistheus' care the Dardan bands:
Then, as the guardian of his people's weal,
Turn'd where contending Chiefs maintain'd the war.

While thus the Trojans mix'd with Albion's sons
In doubtful fray; far other uproar swell'd,
Where toil'd the Giant powers, beneath the rule
Of their dire Monarch. Camber there opposed,
Leagued with the Spartan, and Mycenian Prince,
The rage of fierce Gerontes, or essay'd
To quell Romerus thundering o'er the field.
He, like the bolt that rives some antient oak,
Shot through the host: united legions raised
Their shields in vain; he swept with matchless hand
The plain, and struck to every heart dismay.
A while Megistheus, with the warlike sons
Of Lycia, stay'd his course. He with the first
In prowess rank'd, opposed the giant's sway;
Not vainly; many a prostrate foe confess'd
His power in arms: but when to vengeful ire
Awaked, he sought Androgeus; nought remain'd
Of force to meet the dire destroyer's rage.

As when the North from all her mountains pours

Abroad the tempest; on resounding wings
It comes; and loosening from the shagged rock
A time-worn fragment, hanging o'er the verge,
In thunder hurls it to the tide:—Such seem'd
Thy strength, Romerus, and before thine arm
Thus sunk the nations! Nor in stature less,
Nor less in acts the giant King appear'd:
Wielding the massy oak, he clear'd the path
Amid the bands; and void of conduct, aim'd
By might to conquer, and ungovern'd sway.

DIRE on the field the grisly Monarch stood,
Blaspheming heav'n, and call'd his mates around,
To share his triumph.—'Haste, ye mighty sons
'Of Neptune,' (thus he cried) 'your Sire provides
'A feast in yonder tents; nor of their host,
'Though numerous as the nightly band that howls
'Around our hollow trench, shall one return
'To tell our conquest. With united powers
'Assail; and victory rewards your toil.'

FIERCE, as he said, he seized Megacles, scared,
And shuddering. High he swung his frame in air,
In scorn; then dash'd it prone on earth.—The soul
Rush'd out at once. Then sidelong on the front
Of maim'd Arcesilas, the Monarch's oak
Struck ruinous: he fell; while at his side
Phradmon and Iphicles, two Chiefs renown'd
In war, and join'd by friendship's sacred bands,

Together conquering once, together died;
The vital current mixing, as it well'd
From each gored breast. The giant, stain'd with blood,
Strode grimly horrible, and scour'd the plain.

And now had victory crown'd the savage tribes;
All mounds o'erthrown; but Astor, while he kept
In sight Azuriel, and controll'd his rage,
Beheld the work of death. Th' angelic ken
Traversed a scene, where Camber held his eye
Still on Romerus bent, and stay'd the course
Of the proud Chieftain, else unmatch'd in war.

As to the sun the lunar orb inclines,
Unvarying in its range, so true, the shield
Of Camber, blazing in Romerus' path,
Sustain'd his fiercest onset, and secured
His own from harm. Nor in defence alone
It spread. Though fate forbade Romerus' fall,
Yet many a victim spoke the Trojan's power.
Stretch'd on the plain beneath his strenuous hand,
Rameses sunk: the jave'lin pierced his neck
High as he tower'd, and through the seat of breath
Dismiss'd the furious soul. Alphenor next
His lance arrests: while yet he thinn'd the field
Close by Romerus, and with lifted hand
Poised a rough fragment of mis-shapen ore,
The weapon reach'd the little valve that swells,
Beside the bounding heart, with life's pure stream.

The parting spirit sigh'd, and pass'd in air.

While Camber thus in glorious battle toil'd,
Before him stood th' ethereal shape, conceal'd
In human form. 'Turn, mighty Prince,' he said,
'To quell Gerontes' force. Megistheus gone,
'And great Arimon, by the headlong rage
'Of dire Leontia press'd; the Monarch rules
'At will, presaging ruin. Thou alone
'Canst to his might oppose an equal hand.'

He said. Impetuous Camber took the word
With transport. To Mycene's Prince he left
The task to match Romerus, and repress,
With chosen troops, the giant's dire career.
Then following where the Guide celestial moved,
Soon reach'd the scene of slaughter. As he came,
His voice far echoing, and resplendent plumes
Announced the Hero. At the well-known sound,
Joy seized his troops, who turning on the foe,
Beneath the covert of their shields advanced:
While ceasing from the fight, Gerontes paused
At once irresolute, and call'd his peers
Around, to meet the shock with force combined.

Thus they. But reckless of all other might,
And in himself secure, Romerus stood,
Dark as the full orb'd moon, when clouds invest
Her globe's red circuit, and the future storm
O'erspreads th' ethereal waste. O er the broad field

He look'd, and troubled nations as he gazed.
Leontia near him, stain'd with Spartan blood,
Though chased by great Arimon from the plain,
With her fierce crew advanced. A pile she seem'd
High rear'd, and roughen'd o'er with moss; so rude,
Though yet remotely seen, the furs appear'd
That wrapt her mighty frame. Behind them stood
An host for battle arm'd, and barbarous war;
Those bearing quivers stored with deadly shafts,
And these around them swinging the rough mace,
Or wielding rocks in their uplifted hands.

MEANWHILE, the warlike Spartan join'd in haste
The great Mycenian Chief, and in the van
Sublime, and emulous of deeds, advanced;
Yet knew no triumph, when he eyed afar
The female throng, by him dispersed so late,
Receding sudden, as they mark'd his spear.

THUS met; the warriours chear'd their fainting host,
That, deeply ranged in serried phalanx, closed
To wait the shock of combat. In their front,
Clad in refulgent arms, the Princes moved,
Sublime, and kindled, in their course, the soul
In every breast. Clitander o'er the rest
Tower'd with superiour port, and thus began:

'YE friends, and partners of your Leader's care,
'Turn undismay'd to fight. Yon Giant brood,
'Yon race of mountain shapes, without the mind,

'Appal the timid heart; but, in the brave,
'Stir every spirit into flame. The God
'Supreme, whose breath informs the mortal frame,
'On one, enormous bulk, on one confers
'Thought, wisdom, fortitude, the spirit to dare
'High deeds, the aim to act: maintaining thus
'The balance equal, his impartial hand
'Compensates force with art, and form with soul.
'Meet then yon Champion with undaunted hearts,
'And scorn his boast. Revolve the sign of Jove,
'Announcing conquest. To the brave alike
'Rolls on the hour to triumph, or to die.'

High rising as he spoke, the Hero breathed
Calm courage in his host, the thought that shakes
Unnerving terror off, and there instead,
Plants noble effort, and the strenuous aim
Of resolute attempt. They wait the foe
Unmoved; and closing, meditate the field.

As to the simple race that line the bank
Of sea-like Indus, looks their angry God,
Imperial Brumma, when the Power descends
In wrath, and o'er the Casimerian vales
On sheeted lightning rides, or flings abroad
The tempest, shaking forests in its range,
That at the quiver of his outstretch'd wings
Drop prone: such to his mates Romerus seem'd,
So dire, so terrible; what time he raised

His voice, by echoes borne along the vale.
Now front to front each mighty battle stood
Opposed; these bright in arms, and those endowed
With native strength, though barbarous and unskill'd;
Dreadful they stood, portending horrid deeds,
When first Clitander breaking through the war
Inspired the hope of conquest. Queen Divine,
Who then with pitying eye beheldst the Chief,
Great in his last of days, declare what deeds
The Hero wrought, ere with advent'rous arm
He match'd Romerus' force, and fell'd his hand!
Geruthmon, vengeful as an angry Fiend,
First on Clitander flew, shaking his mace,
And uttering direful threats. Aloft he raised
His oak, unmindful of his rival's spear,
And javelin wing'd. But ere the fight commenced,
War's mighty angel, stern Azzazel, stood
Betwixt the combatants, and awed at once
The Fiend opposed, fell Ramiel, into peace.
As from the sun's bright eye the parting shade
Shrinks back; the Demon from Azzazel's glance
Thus parted terror-struck, and left the pair.
Full on his rival's front, the Leader now
Advanced in splendent arms: in his strong grasp
The spear, though ponderous, seem'd a flexile reed
Wielded with ease. While yet Geruthmon swung
His mace around him, glaring on the foe

With blood-stain'd orbs, (horrific sight!) that flash'd
Through locks of flying and dishevell'd hair;
The weapon reach'd his heart. On Cardon next,
He turn'd in all his strength, and shook the dart
Wing'd with sure fate. Azzazel now aloft
Hung o'er him. From the lightning of his shield
The giant fled aghast: but ere he gain'd
The sheltering oak, though lighten'd of his club,
Cast in his flight behind, the javelin pierced
His back, and stretch'd him breathless on the plain.
Nor here alone Clitander's arm prevail'd,
While heav'n propitious look'd benignant on.
Beneath his lance Orgythion, Memnon bled;
And Hyperenor, like an ancient elm
Spread on the ground that felt its friendly shade
So late, now maim'd and panting press'd the ground.
Amaze, till now unfelt, and horrour seized,
This seen, the Giant brood. The heart, that met
Unawed the keenest monster of the wild,
Now sunk depress'd: the hand, that in its gripe
Held fast the gasping wolf, in vain that writhed
To free his throat, now trembled. Such the fear
Impress'd by mortal and immortal Powers.
Thus, while the Grecian Leader held his course,
Leagued with Androsthenes, who at his side
Still fought, with young Philantes in his train;
Romerus, by the Spartan warriours hemm'd

Around, and coping with their prudent Chief
Arimon, now retiring, and anon
Assailing his high foe, maintain'd the fight
Doubtful, yet foaming with indignant ire.
Meanwhile stern Arion mark'd Clitander's path,
Rageful. A name he bore of high renown
With his fierce mates; and many a victim gored,
Told of his ruthless heart, and vigorous hand.

CLAD in their spoils, and glorying in his might,
While with an axe, which once an Albian own'd,
He thinn'd the fight; the savage Champion saw
The Greek's great deeds, and, raising his strong voice,
Recall'd the spirits of the shrinking throng.

'WHAT dread,' he thus exclaim'd; 'what spell con-
'Yon trembling herd! Ye dastards, face your foes, (founds
'And turn yon reptiles back; else on your heads
'This hand shall spread destruction.' At his call,
As when two meeting winds suspend the flight
Of heaven's imperial bird, they stop; They claim
Once more with new-born strength the field of fame.

To ward the shock, the great Mycenean drew
His numbers close, who on broad orbs received
Rocks, stones, and clubs, impell'd with force immense;
But with no certain aim. Loud was the roar,
And dire the conflict; yet Clitander moved
Secure, and shaded by his ample shield.

YET not compacted bands, with their great Chief

Refulgent in the van, though hosts beheld
With dread the deep arrangement, tamed the soul
Of Arion, or repress'd the furious thought
That urged him onward. Clearing with his axe
A path, he bore whate'er opposed his sway
Before him. Hyperinthus felt its edge
On his torn visage, while his useless helm
Cumber'd the plain dishonour'd. Near him lay
Prothenor, by a sidelong stroke o'erturn'd;
While, as Clitander's guard, he tried to ward
A blow to reach the conquering Chief design'd.
At last the rivals met, and mix'd in fight
By fate impell'd. Each on his arm relied.
As on the void of air, when forms appear
In superstition's eye, denouncing death,
And charged with threatening mandates that forebode
The fall of empires; wielding their loose spears,
In fiery arms they meet, and seem to shake
Their locks that scatter plagues, and kindle war;
Such were th' encountering foes; and as they raised
Their hands, the fate of ages yet to come
Hung on the meditated aim. Each sought
To give no second stroke, while this, poised high
The spear, and that, essay'd by force to quell
All opposition. One decisive blow
The Giant warriour tried, with pride elate,
And of the Greek disdainful. But the foe

Recoiling shunn'd the death, then watchful, mark'd
His time, and as the disappointed Chief
Reel'd forward staggering, struck with ready hand
The gory visage from his trunk. It fell;
While by the locks Clitander raised aloft
The bloody head, by all with horrour view'd.
Not louder roars, from brazen tubes, arranged
On navies proudly floating on the deep,
Th' unprisoned thunder, when the shores afar
Re-echo to its voice, than thy fierce sons,
Gerontes, bellow'd, when their fallen compeer
Lay headless thus in sight. Leontia, chief,
Rush'd through the croud; and dashing on the ground
Her quiver, seized a mace, and on the Prince
Flew like a mountain tempest. Stroke on stroke
Now doubling, thunder'd on Clitander's shield
Turn'd, as he strove on every side, to ward
Th' attack so closely urged: but ere th' event
Was known, the tumult raised a mightier foe.
For lo! Romerus, whose wide-wasting hand
Had foil'd the Spartan King, and driven his host
In herds before him; following to the camp
Their headlong flight; now heard distressful sounds
Alarm'd, and backward as he look'd, survey'd
Dire scenes, that roused to mighty deeds his mind.
Amid the slaughter of a nameless throng,
Clitander took his sight, a flaming form,

Around him spreading fate. He felt the dread,
That spoke some minister of heav'n at hand:
Yet trusting in his own unconquer'd arm,
A shout he raised, that echoed o'er the vales
Afar, and moved to meet the hostile spear.

CLITANDER, ceasing from his course; though nought
Leontia with her Amazonian band
Had in the fight avail'd; in luckless hour,
Unhappy! mark'd the giant's pine-like form:
And leaning on his sword, (his female foe
Stood back, Romerus in her ruthless heart
Inspired such awe;) a moment breathed from toil,
And with unalter'd thought o'erlook'd the scene.

Now full in sight the savage warriour strode
In all his terrours; dreadful as the shape
Sublime, that hovers on the midnight air,
O'ershading heav'n's broad arch, as on the vault
He hangs, and dimly on his outstretch'd hand
Extends the scourge, or mutters on the blast
Sounds of approaching fate that strike dismay.

NEAR as Romerus came, when from his charge
The Guardian Spirit withdrew; was seen afar,
In flight, and brandishing his fateful dart,
Death's dreaded Angel. O'er Clitander's head,
Charged with the mandate of heav'n's King, he stay'd;
And, smiting in mid air his gleaming shield,
That sounded long and hollow, mutter'd words

Presageful of the last impending hour.
" BUT, this unknown, the Grecian hero eyed
His mighty rival undismay'd. The thought,
That scans the deeds of virtue, bade his heart
Be still: on his extended arm he raised
A shield that screen'd within its ample round
His form, down from his forehead to the knee,
Not without dread beheld.—Behind the fence,
As one that from a rampart's height surveys
Besieging armies, thus he mark'd the foe,
Though great; who, now in near approach, unma[illegible]'d
All but the calm Mycenian. On the Prince
Imperious scowling with indignant eye,
Yet deigning parle, he gazed, and thus began:
' I DEEM thee, warriour, of thy kindred mates
' Among the prime. Thine arms and mien bespeak
' One of the first regard. But that thy spear
' Smokes with a brother's blood, (by strength divine,
' Not by thine own impell'd) I could methinks
' Yet spare thy life. But thou hast madly dared,
' Mean as thou art, to lift thy feeble hand
' Against a race superiour; and our sire
' Incensed, imperial Neptune, hath allow'd
' Thy triumph. Here it ceases: Fate even now
' Hangs o'er thee. Meet Romerus' hand, and die.'
Dreadful he said, and measuring with a look
Contemptuous of the Greek, his lifted spear,

In action terrible, approach'd the Prince,
Unmoved of heart, who thus serene, replied:
'OF these thy barbarous tribes, I deem thee Chief,
'The first in prowess, as in sway. I see
'What desolation marks thy path, and tells
'The terrors of thine arm. But heav'n's great Lord
'Decides of death or conquest: at His call
'Aroused, the feeble lifts his hand;—and lo!
'The mighty lies on earth! Nor think I dread
'Thy rage, or shun to meet thine utmost power.
'Not thine the voice of Jove. What He ordains
'Stands fix'd. Even thou must bend that haughty crest,
'At His command: and should the God decree,
'By me to punish thy presumptuous pride,
'This spear may stretch thee breathless on the field.'
HE said.—The parting weapon held its course
Direct; and piercing in Romerus' front,
What bore the semblance of a warriour's shield,
An orb immense, of rude materials fram'd,
By hands unskill'd; within his open side
Stood quivering, though the spreading ribs denied
To reach a vital part. The giant felt
The point receding. Wrenching from the wound
The dart, he whirl'd it at Clitander's head,
With force of power to tear a rooted oak
From its deep base; but slanting on his helm,
It sunk in earth. And now Romerus saw

The Grecian's sword, a flaming blade, display'd
While from his ash, in vain around him wheel'd,
Or aim'd direct, still scaped the watchful foe;
Now back recoiling quick, or bending low,
Mocking each foil'd attempt. His stern compeer
Mark'd, in the hand of force already tried,
What seem'd impending fate; and saw how vain
Untutor'd strength, to match inferiour power
By skill directed. Instant thought impell'd
The first bold deed.—In heaps before him lay
Rough piles of rocky fragments, ore unshaped,
And stones, a mingled mass at random thrown.
A tree's broad root entire in haste he poised
On his strong arm aloft. Amazement seized
Each host, that from its inmost depth fell back
Aghast!—Ah! then avail'd not to its Lord
The shield's o'ershading circle, or the mail
That wrapt his manly form; the helm that gave
Its silver plumage to the breeze! He fell!
Though turn'd oblique the thundering ruin glanced,
Nor crush'd his life at once; and on the plain,
Before his native bands, before thine eyes,
Arimon and Androsthenes, the man
Revered, the Prince, alike renown'd in fight,
And famed for gentler wisdom, press'd the field,
While from his temples gush'd the vital stream!
In fall'n Clitander, as an host had sunk

At once, the Spartan and Mycenian Chiefs
Deplored the man, the hero, and the friend,
All lost. Romerus from the fight surceased,
Stung by his wound: for yet the barbed point
Stood in his side infix'd, and wrought him woe.
But Ramiel near, what time rude hands employ'd
Their skill to wrench it, loosen'd from its hold
The steel that rising upwards sunk in earth.
Then closed the flesh; and as by power divine
Relieved, the giant stood, to strength restored.
MEANWHILE the Chief, who shared Clitander's love
O'er all the rest, Androsthenes, approach'd
Supreme in grief, and beat his throbbing breast
A while in speechless anguish. 'Is it thus,'
Grasping the dying hero's hand, exclaim'd
At last th' unthinking Prince: 'Gods! is it thus
'We see your auguries fulfill'd? What blood
'Will stain thine altars, Jove! Yes, Prince, I see
'That death-stain'd eye urging its last request;
'Not vainly urged. I live but to avenge
'Thy fall on yonder foe.—Eternal hate
'I swear.'—The bursting groan suppress'd his voice;
And sorrow wrung his heart.—Th' expiring friend,
With dim orbs fading, that like shades beheld
The flitting forms around him, sighing, thus
Replied with feeble lips.—'Ah! blame not heav'n,
'Rash as thou art! I see the joyful hour

'Of triumph rolling onwards! But the Gods
'Forbid to share it. Be their sacred will
'Obey'd.—Thou decent on the funeral pile
'Dispose these limbs.—Locrinus! Oh! I see
'Thine arm victorious, and unmoved, attend
'The voice that calls me hence.' The spirit sought
New scenes, while yet he spoke, and left the corse
Extended cold and breathless on the ground.

And now Androsthenes, who seized the sword
Of fall'n Clitander, eager to avenge
His fate, had shared it; for the giant shook
Again his ash, and raised a dreadful shout,
Far heard. But from the wilderness now roll'd
Sounds of approaching aid that still'd the war.

For lo! the man Divine, from his own powers
Detain'd, while Segonax before him fled
With Albion's sons, even to the fortress chased,
And harrow'd with foul rout, return'd at last,
Call'd by the Guardian of the Isle. Not long
The hero toil'd in battle, with his troop
Of Dardan warriours, hemm'd on every side
Around, by foes that stay'd his wasteful hand.
Through their close ranks he broke, and with his mate
Bold Phrenor marching, and a chosen few,
Scatter'd an host before him.—When they fled,
Had then Locrinus join'd his native bands,
Plunged with his sire amid the giant race,

And braved their mightiest; one decisive hour
Had seen his arms with final conquest crown'd,
But urged at once by anger, and desire
To mark their last retreat, he held his course
Onward, along the dark o'ershading wood;
Nor ceased, till on its farther side, he view'd
The fort's wide circuit, and the winding stream.

MEANWHILE the Guardian of the land beheld
With grief th' alternate fortunes of the day;
While Brutus fought, successful; but o'ercast
With clouds and darkness, where Romerus ruled.
What time she saw the Dardan Prince surcease
From fight, and leaning on his spear, survey
With fix'd regard the giant seats; the Queen
Celestial, veil'd in mortal form, announced
Clitander's fate, rousing his spirit up
To thought of instant vengeance. Stern he moved
In flaming arms triumphant! In his van,
Zelohim with the guardian Power advanced,
On splendent wings; while shouting hosts behind
Pour'd long and loud acclaim. In all his might
He came, by toil unbroke; and scattering fate
Around him, rush'd terrific on the foe.

ROMERUS mark'd his course, and dubious, first
Knew dread.—'What God,' he cried, 'descends to blast
'All human force!—I see the hand that smote
'Our host so late!—Yet shall this arm, inured

'To fight, desert the day? Shall I return
'Inglorious? first let some voracious wolf,
'That sculking in his gloomy cavern, fear'd
'To hear this death-denouncing voice, arise,
'And brave me in the desart.' As he spoke
He turn'd, and met Locrinus in his ire,
Herculean form! and seem'd alike prepared
For bold assault, or for defence. At hand,
He knew the foe; for in his eyes he read
Clitander's hapless doom. He sprung at once
Onwards impetuous, nor with fury less
Inspired, than when a lion on the waste
Beholds a ravenous tiger, with his young
Half-gorged, repell'd the giant; and incensed,
In voice and act indignant, thus began:

'SAY, what art thou, whose gloomy front bespeaks
'Defiance?—Here thy triumph ends.—I scorn
'The boast of arrogance.—Yet tell, what blood
'Stains that dire hand!' With new-born dread o'erawed,
The foe stood fix'd; for Albion's ruling Queen
Around the Hero cast terrific light,
That thrill'd the pulse of life; and as thy form,
Grim Death, he stood, commission'd to arrest
The vital tide, shaking the mortal lance,
That gives no second stroke. Nor less in might
Appear'd Romerus. As a rock's rough height,
Bared to the blasting whirlwind; or a tower

Whose summit, tempest-shaken, yet o'erlooks
Afar the wilderness: thus rudely great
He seem'd; and yet, upheld by native pride,
Eyeing the Prince askance, unmoved replied:
'KNOW thou,' whate'er thy lineage, (for some God
'I deem thee;) not to him who swells the tide
'Of battle, nor the mightier Queen, who bears
'Aloft the Ægis of eternal Jove,
'I yield. Of all who fill the thrones above,
'No king we own, but him who holds his rule
'On yonder world, and from the bleak surge rolls
'His words on whirlwinds. 'Twas this hand that laid
'Thy friend in dust: this mass of iron smokes
'With his best blood. I seek not, nor decline,
'With thee the combat. Be the choice thine own.'
THUS he: The fury in Locrinus' soul
Forbade all pause. Though high the Giant rear'd
In his right hand th' o'ershading mace, and swung
A bulk stupendous in his left; the Prince
Rush'd on terrific. His uplifted arm
He grasp'd; and, ere he cast the ruin, struck
The javelin rapid, where the shoulder joins
The spreading chest. Deep to the bone it sunk;
Gush'd a black torrent: nor Locrinus staid
To wrench the dart, but springing backward, raised
His fateful spear, and with a hand like his
Who wields the thunder, (thus he seem'd) prepared

To launch it at the mark. That instant fell
The mace, but slanting as the Dardan turn'd,
On his bright mail, it trench'd the soil beneath,
Wielded in vain. Not more avail'd the mass
Unshaped and horrid. Bounding from the shield
It thunder'd rude, yet harmless o'er the plain.
Now from Locrinus' mighty hand the spear
Came like the wing of lightning. On the mace
It struck, and loosening from Romerus' grasp
Rent the strong ash, and rooted deep in earth
Stood quivering through the trunk! Amaze and dread
Froze his thrill'd heart; his livid eye-balls roll'd
Aghast; and fate's tremendous gulph disclosed,
Yawn'd wide beneath him! nor his stunn'd compeers,
So wont to hail their champion's might, essay'd
At first to ward his death. Each, as he eyed
The hero, wish'd some cavern's gloomy depth
To hold him shrouded from a sight so dire.
At last Gobinus, emulous of deeds,
Not touch'd with pity, braved the warriour's ire.
One sire with fraudful Vortiger he own'd,
But hardy, resolute, and braced to fight,
Knew no deceit, but glorying in his strength
Plunged in the battle desperate. From the throng
He rush'd, and sudden, ere Locrinus freed
His spear entangled, hurl'd a craggy stone
On his broad shield;—the bounding orb repell'd

The mass, and rising vigorous, on his foe
The Chief burst terrible; nor less when near,
Dreaded, than Gorgon's blasting eyes, or what
Rapt fancy dream'd of Hydra, or the den
Of dire Alecto, or Medusa, veil'd
In blood-congealing locks. Sublime he moved,
A fiery form; and through the light that shone
Around him, waved the desolating sword,
Far-beaming in his front. Gobinus saw,
And mixing rapid in the crowd, escaped
The winged death.—Cardon! thy panting heart
It cleaved; and issuing through the spinal bone,
Prone sunk the corse; the spirit fled in air.

As when the sun on India's favour'd clime
Pours his first rays, the feeble stars that gild
Heav'n's arch, in darkness veil their lucid orbs;
Nor from the shores of Java or Tridore,
While yet the western hemisphere lies wrapt
In night, are seen the solar globes remote,
That lighten other worlds; all by one sun
Suffused, or deeply shaded: thus the rout,
But late so dreadful, from Locrinus' eye
Shrunk back; nor other than that hero seem'd
To rule, and to direct the rage of war.

Now from the right, great Brutus with his band
Came onward, yet unconscious of the deeds
His son atchieved; but late returning, shared,

Not led the triumph. From the giant crew
Arose at last the yell of deep despair.
All turn'd; while on their heads an arrowy shower
Rain'd black and wasteful. In the storm, alone
Romerus vanquish'd, bleeding, yet maintain'd
His place unshaken. Through the shade he lower'd
Portentous; bearing on his outstretch'd shield
Long lances quivering. Azrael spread a veil
Of air around; and in the tumult, screen'd
This bulwark of his host from farther harm.
Great even in adverse fate, Romerus saw
His mates all shelter'd in the woodland's depth,
Ere yet himself withdrew. Sullen and slow
At last he follow'd; for Locrinus' form
O'eraw'd him, and the Genius of the Isle
Depress'd his mighty heart. The forest screen'd
His bulk, and ceased the tumult of the field.

BRITANNIA.

BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

While BRUTUS is musing in his tent, a Stranger is brought before him by the guards of the camp, who proves to be a Bard, commissioned to give him warning of some impending calamity. He recounts his story, and breaking into a prophetic ecstacy, fulfills his purpose, according to principles of the Platonic Philosophy. In the mean time SATAN, being now convinced that his presence is necessary to accomplish the overthrow of BRUTUS, ascends to earth with the Fiend BETHPHLEGON, whom he lodges in a deep cavern, until matters should be prepared for her exhibition upon the field. AZRAEL, while SATAN is thus employed, finding no unanimity among the Fiends, whom he assembles from all quarters, during the silence of night, acquaints them with the journey of their Prince to Albion, and dismisses them with a charge of watching the motions of the celestial Spirits, in order to appease his anger. SATAN mentions to AZRAEL his design and first success, and having given him a command to encourage the followers of GERONTES, disappears. In obedience to this command, the Demon, having assumed the form of a warriour, enters unexpectedly into a council of the Giants and Albian Princes, whom ANDROGEUS had almost persuaded to send a deputation to BRUTUS, and determines them to continue the war, by the promise of superiour assistance.

LODG'D in their tents, when now the setting sun
Play'd on the chalky cliffs, and faintly tinged
The forest's waving umbrage; deep repose
Now still'd the settling host:—the Chiefs released

From toil, here smarting from their wounds, and there
Thronging the festive board, or stretch'd in sleep
Amid their arms, and coping in their dreams
With giant foes, as choice prescribed
Their course, or stern necessity impell'd;
Employ'd the passing hour to rest decreed.

But far apart, th' imperial Prince revolved
In thought the future war:—his equal mind
Unmoved by prosperous fate, to Jove's high throne
In pray'r ascended, erring, yet of heav'n
Approved, that seann'd a heart unstain'd and pure.

While musing thus retired, a troop that roused
The camp, approaching took his ear.—In sight
They came, and to their Chief convey'd a sage,
Their charge, not prisoner, whose benignant eye
And aspect spoke of peace.—A silver beard
Flow'd on his breast; and o'er his form a robe
Girt with a circling zone, depending fell
Loose-floating to his feet. In height beyond
A common size, he stood erect; and held
In his right hand the shell, whose breath divine
Holds with the heart a colloquy that wakes
Young Feeling at her fount.—The Monarch mark'd
The sire with searching look. Beneath a veil
His watchful prudence fear'd the spy conceal'd;
Yet locking in his heart the secret doubt,
He view'd him smiling, and desired to share

Of hospitable rites.—The stranger sat,
Partook the genial banquet:—when refresh'd,
The Chief with mild and gentle voice began:
'SON of Apollo; for thy gesture speaks
'Of favouring Gods, declare thy race, thy name
'Say, as a wanderer comest thou, or empower'd,
'Perhaps by tribes that haunt the mid-land waste
'Of this broad region, to convey some charge
'Of glad import; whate'er thine errand, speak
'Secure; the stranger claims our care; the Bard
'Loved of Apollo, and the tuneful nine,
'Commands our reverence as the God supreme.'
To him the Bard.—'Imperial Prince, to men,
'The simple natives of a land remote,
'Thou speak'st of unknown Gods.—The Power that breathes
'Deep in the bosom of the sacred oak,
'We know, what time in every living bough
'His spirit murmurs, and prophetic sounds
'Trill through the leaves, that quiver as they bear
'The voice of DESTINY!—This heart expands,
'What time the Godhead with new life informs
'Its pulse, and full descending, drives this hand,
'This time-worn hand, along these swelling chords,
'That tremble, heaven-inspired.—Of its high Lord
'I come commission'd, from an Isle that hears,
'On Albion's western coast, the roaring main
'Around its solitary shores. Its hills

'O'erlook the parent land, not far disjoin'd
'By interposing waves: Mona its name.
'THERE, while I roam'd apart, amid the gloom
'Of pendent woods, a gradual trance o'erpower'd,
'(What time in luxury of ease I sunk
'Supine) the visual orbs: and ecstacy,
'Such as slow music at the hour of eve
'Awakes, when winding down the narrow vale
'From some aerial lute, came gently o'er
'My heart. A voice divine then gave command.
'Go hence (thus heav'n ordains) to Albion's shore;
'There wait th' Eternal's mandate, and obey
'Submiss; still following where the *Leading Sign*
'Shall onward point thy path.—Depart!—The voice
'Here ceased.—The Spirit of the Desert call'd
'My steps abroad.—I follow'd where he led,
'And pass'd the swelling surges, and advanced
'Along the mazes of the woody wild,
'Or bank of willow'd stream, or cavern drear,
'The boar's rude haunt, who with erected hairs,
'And fangs disparting, as I came retired,
'Heav'n-awed.—My food the wither'd fruit supplied,
'Dropt from the leafless bough, or herbage shower'd
'Along the waste by Nature's bounteous hand,
'Rear'd by the genial spring. Day after day,
'Led by a guide unseen, I journey'd on,
'Till with the tenth revolving sun, I reach'd

'This camp. A guard received me, and convey'd
'To thee, great Prince, uninjured, where I wait
'To know what God enjoins.'—He ceased; the Chief
Still held a secret doubt; yet with a brow
Serene, and courteous in his act, replied:
'To unexperienced wanderers, in an Isle
'Unknown to fame, nor skill'd in arts that raise
'And dignify the kind; thy presence, guest,
'And manners, speak thee unallied. Thou seemst,
'(If sage experience leads me to decide
'Aright, on scenes in distant climes explored;)
'To foreign regions known, and sprung perhaps
'Of foreign lineage:—then sincere declare
'Whate'er of Powers that guide the wheels unseen
'Of fate, deep study, or entranced sight
'To thee disclosed; that hence for each event
'Prepared, of prosperous or distressful change,
'This heart in all may trace th' Eternal's hand.'
'DARK are the ways,' the stranger thus rejoin'd,
'Of Nature's King, who marks successive forms
'Of man, of empire, as they rise or sink
'In shade; Himself amid perpetual change
'Alone immutable!—On thee his hand
'Engraves in living characters, his last,
'His noblest boon, the prudence of the wise.
'Attend!—My voice relates a faithful tale,
'With what of heav'n's decrees its Sovereign gives

This tongue to utter, or this thought to scan.

'KNOW then, imperial Prince, the Land of Jove
'First gave me birth; the fruitful Isle that sees
'An hundred cities rising o'er the fields,
'That gaily-smiling wave with golden grain.
'In early youth hence parting with desire
'To learn what regions, o'er the world renown'd
'For Virtue, Science, Art, of light supplied;
'To Nile's prolific land I held my course,
'And pass'd to climes that heard the voice divine
'Of Zoroaster, and the Magian Band.
'Thence, from Ionia's coast I reach'd at last
'The clime of Freedom, where Ilyssus laves
'Lycean walks; while o'er the placid stream
'Its Genius leaning, listens to the lore
'Of scientific sages, skill'd to draw
'Truth from Astrea's side, again to live
'With man, in words that gently lure the heart,
'Sweet as the Muses' song.—Here, year on year
'Stole unperceived away.—But Phœbus urged
'At last, or hope impell'd my willing mind,
'To visit scenes remote. I launch'd once more
'On the broad deep, no God invoked to guide
'My course. A tempest rushing from the shore,
'Jove breathed the rude blast, drove us o'er the main;
'Ill-fated wanderers, till the sacred Isle
'Of Mona, in its hospitable shades

'And welcome ports, received us, and retain'd.'

He said; and snatching, while the Monarch heard
His words intent, the long-resounding lyre,
Burst ardent into song. The strain began
With Oromazes, and thy hostile power,
Dire Arimanius, scattering o'er the work
Of Natures bounteous Lord, the seeds of Ill.
He sung the fatal Egg, impregn'd with death,
Blue plagues, and fate, that rushing from the shell,
Deform the Maker's beauteous work, and taint
The face of things yet smiling from his hand,
With blasting breath. Then, turning from a scene
Abhorr'd, he sung of Spirits that hold their seats
On earth, and watch the busy haunts of man,
Or wing the mid-way void, and mount th' abode
Of Jove, with tidings from the world below:
Thus, fraught with mandates, and alternate prayers,
Now rigid ministers of Fate, and now,
Mild meditating powers, whom heav'n's Supreme
Beholds relenting, while his arm upraised
To launch th' avenging bolt, suspended hangs
On air, and pity melts his awful eye.*

Next of relentless Lachesis† he sung,
Her lap with tablets, as the ceaseless wheel
Of destiny revolved, that bore inscribed
The fate of mortals, ever fill'd; the spokes,

* See the Author's Essay on the Theology of Plato. † See the same.

Each as it rose alternate, or declined,
Cast up some die of fate, engraved beneath
By old Necessity's deep-trenching pen,
Charged with the doom of empires, or of man,
The insects of the day. Beside her sat
The fateful Sisters, singing as they wove
An ever-varying texture; of the past,
The present, and the future.—From his hand
Sudden he dropt the lyre; his eye-balls stood
In gaze expanded, darting as it seem'd
Their pointed radiance, on a scene beyond
The ken of mortals! On the void of air
His hand out-stretch'd, and grasping, seem'd prepared
To catch some flitting object, ere it mix'd
In shade! In speechless trance the Prophet saw
What stood unveil'd, when broken sounds announced
Returning sense; 'I see,' he cried, 'the wheel!
'It rolls! What tablet, black and deeply mark'd,
'From yonder spoke ascending, darts aloft!
'It bears thy name, great Monarch! While I speak,
'The colour shifts, and spreading white prevails!'

He said, and musing, when to calmer thought
Restored, on Brutus bent a placid look,
And thus in few. 'The Gods, great Prince, announce
'Some signal ill impending, ere you reach
'The destined end; be firm, nor cease to hope:
'Jove shields the virtuous, while he proves the heart,

'By search refined, and fashion'd in the mould
'Of trial; pliant as dissolving gold,
'Pure from the flame, that to the forming hand
'Inclines. I warn thee, Prince, and now fulfil
'The task by heav'n enjoin'd.'—The Prophet ceased
The Chief with reverence heard, and stood prepared
To bow submissive to th' Eternal's will.

MEANWHILE the Monarch of th' abyss, alarm'd
That yet no Demon trode the downward path,
From earth with tidings fraught; alone explored
The void immense, and anxious, look'd abroad
Prepared to meet the first descending wing.

HIM on his errand bent, Azuriel met,
A messenger of death;—his flight announced
Speed urged by dread; the Fiend succinct rehearsed
Locrinus' acts; of foul defeat he spoke,
Romerus' wound, Gerontes' headlong flight,
Of Medon, Harpagus, Gargantius slain.
'Yon distant murmurs borne along the dark
'Are theirs: th' indignant Spirits (thus he said)
'Call on our kindred race for great revenge.'

HE ceased, nor to his words th' infernal King
Replied; but backward held his course, in thought
Revolving as he pass'd, a direful deed,
Alone in perilous scenes to be atchiev'd.

HENCE, from the confluence of unnumber'd Fiends,
All gathering round him to receive command,

He singled Beëlzebub. Him apart
He call'd amid his mansion's deepest shade,
There screen'd from prying eyes; and thus began:

'FRIEND, what I fear'd, and oft impending eyed
'Afar, the time confirms. Brutus, upheld
'By heav'n, that as its instrument employs
'Locrinus' arm, in every fight prevails.
'Nor, if I read futurity aright,
'Will aught avail to stop his strong career,
'Till from his host we draw the mighty Chief,
'Who rules the fight, and drive the foes dismay'd,
'Their Leader absent from the field of war.

'THOU know'st that on this gulph's remotest bound,
'The shape that hail'd us once with gleaming eyes,
'Scattering blue plagues, as o'er these livid lakes
'A lone inhabitant she trode, and shriek'd
'Our horrid welcome; yet resides. The charge
'Be thine to loose the hell-born pest, and bear
'Hither, secure.—Approach her undismay'd,
'But cast that pall, immersed in triple night,
'And spreading * solid darkness, o'er her frame,
'Ere yet thou touch the Fury, else her voice
'Will here awake new tumult. Go with speed.
'I with this dire Compeer again prepare
'To visit earth, and mar th' Eternal's aim.'

WHILE yet th' Archangel spoke, the willing Fiend

* Exod. x. 21.

Withdrew well-pleased; and speeding to the lake
Of black Cocytus, mark'd above the tide
The rock high-towering, and the goblin veil'd;
Though fixt, and lock'd with adamantine bars;
Yet darting terrour from her haggard eyes,
Even to the inmost soul. Aloft he soar'd
On air, and o'er her sudden dropt the pall,
Ere yet he touch'd her with adventurous hand:
Then with his mate explored the Archangel's hall.

As clouds that passing veil th' autumnal sun,
Disclose his orb a moment, while they sweep
Along th' aerial arch;—from the dim front
Of Satan, thus a ray of gladness glanced,
What time he saw the mighty Angel near,
With his infernal prize, nor knew that God
Ordain'd, to work its own superiour ends,
The whole, and to his joy prescribed its bound.

But now th' Arch-foe from Beëlzebub took
The shape, to sight exulting; for himself
Had thither borne the sprite, but that he fear'd
Th' Omniscient Eye on him more closely bent
Than on inferiour agents: and in words
Veiling his secret dread, benignly said:

'Thus far 'tis well. But now a mighty work
'Calls me to earth. Thou as thy charge, receive
'As wont, these myriads, and conduct their plans
'Ever to evil purpose: for thou know'st

'Their power and bias still to practise ill.
'Assume my place; nor without leave, permit
'One spirit to pass these bounds ere I return,
'Or send command.'—He spoke, and turning, sought
A deep recess, and doubtful there revolved
Deeds with a strenuous hand to be atchieved.
At last, array'd in panoply divine
He stood: and, grasping in his right the sword
So known, and dreaded, as it blazed in fight;
Nor but by thunder quell'd, held, with his charge,
To earth, and Albion's distant land, his way.
Meantime the baffled Azrael with his train
In solemn council met. A cave they sought,
Immense of circuit, far beneath the deep,
Whence the rude surges dashing on the rocks
Above, were heard, tremendous as the blast
Of autumn rushing down the hills. Here, screen'd
From aught but dire remembrance, and the ken
Of God's all-searching eye, they sat, and gave
Free judgment, utterance. All deplored the past:
But hate, and mutual accusation fill'd
Each thought and voice. Abuse, and foul reproach,
Ecchoed from mouth to mouth. Each from himself
With indignation cast the charge of blame;
While these, in bold and hasty words, impeached
Their mates of gross misconduct, or neglect,
Or tame observance; those, in doubtful phrase,

With sly insinuating guile, essay'd
To brand their fellows' deeds, and clear their own.
What one propounded thus, another heard
Scornful, and as incongruous, or unfit
For use, rejected. Their great Chief remote,
They own'd no delegated hand, nor knew
Subordination; and the mightier tried
In vain to calm their discord, and fierce ire.
At last their Leader, Azrael, by the NAME
Of their great Sovereign, known in hell alone;
Not used but in th' extreme of perilous rage,
Or opposition; sounds by mortal man
Not to be utter'd, that the deeps beneath
Through all their vast re-echo: by that Name
Adjured them, and prevail'd. Silent they sat,
In fix'd amazement, when the Fiend began:
'Ye Powers infernal, whom one common cause
'Calls forth, and interest in one league conjoins!
'Whence is it, Thrones immortal! that ye breathe
'Hate to each other thus, and madly mix
'In uproar, when the time demands your close
'And greatest efforts?—Ye have heard the NAME
'That hither calls the Monarch of the shades,
'Even from wide nature's limit; from the verge
'Of sunless chaos. Now prepare to meet
'His wrath: we hold not more consult: He comes;
'And with a consort, if I rightly judge,

'Whose red eyes scatter darts of living fire.
'Haste to your several tasks, and search around
'The hostile camp, scanning with heedful sight
'Each scene. Myself will meet th' infernal King.'

He spoke: and rapid as the blast that sweeps
Thy palms, Metamba, glancing from the cloud;
The spirits, as they heard, dispersed in air.

Ere this, the Sovereign of the realms beneath,
Under the pall of clouds around him spread,
Held on his course, unmark'd, but by the ken
Omniscient. He, whose eye pervades at once
All space, then gave the Fiend to bear his prize
Safe to the shore of Albion! and to lodge
Deep, where th' expanding earth disclosed a void
Fit to receive the pest. God saw, and will'd
That hour, by means beyond created thought
To fathom, glory to himself in all.

His work half-finish'd thus;—the Prince of hell,
Call'd by th' unutterable name, whose sound
Announc'd rough contest, sought th' upper air.
There, near the cavern, whence the race below
So late in tumult pass'd, fierce Azrael met
His Lord; and though his glance announcing ire
O'erawed him; yet, reveal'd the cause that urged
His desperate act; and told what new employ
Now held his busy mates, who screen'd the flight
Of Satan from the Guardian of the Isle,

And heav'n's all-prying sons. Of these he gave
The names, and various deeds in short detail:
Then ceased. Th' Archangel heard, and thus replied:

'ME on some mighty deed, or great emprise
'Employ'd perhaps, whence hell may rise in arms
'More equal to the Thunderer; or obtain
'Some greater seat of empire; to recal,
'Without some cause of equal force assign'd,
'Were worthy chastisement. Misrule alone,
'Or disobedience, justify the deed.
'These, here at once combined, excuse thine act:
'And that thou gavest th' inferiour powers command
'To watch the Guardian spirit, and the sons
'Of heav'n, deep-shading from their prying eyes
'My flight, and secret purposes, was well.
'Hear now, and execute what I command.

'THE Pest, in hell Bethphlegon named, by man
'Despair, with me beheld the climes of day,
'But late; and in a deep recess remains
'Fix'd; yet prepared to act whate'er I will.
'As yet the time demands not, that we cope
'With our great foe in arms, or meet his rage.
'Thou then observant mark me; and obey.
'This hour Gerontes with his leaders, hold
'A council. Doubt o'erwhelms them, and dismay.
'Go thou, and with the hope of mightier aid
'Chear each desponding heart: with morn provoke

'Once more the fight; and if with wonted force
'Locrinus sweep the field, thou from the camp
'Seduce his lov'd one, his Almeria: I
'Will give thy tongue persuasion. To the wild
'Conduct the nymph, and leave her; yet forbear
'To hurt. Heav'n guards her innocence from ill.
'That done, the charge, to draw the boasted Chief
'Far from his native legions, and surround
'With frauds, and trials yet unfelt, is mine!'

He ceased; and fearful of intruding spies
That might disclose his errand, or announce
Of his arrival with some deep intent;
Withdrew precipitant. Thick darkness wrapt
Th' Archangel, shrinking in its depth from view.

Yet, not unknown he pass'd, nor unobserved
In his aerial range. Zelohim mark'd
The cloud that wrapt him, as it rose to sight,
While yet he journey'd with his dire compeer,
Shading the orient. By desire impell'd
To know what lodged within, his keen eye pierced
The dark, and saw th' imperial King of hell,
As on some mighty errand, with his mate,
Holding his course to Albion. In his rear,
Onward he came with slow but steady wing;
Nor left him, till the gulph, disclosed beneath,
Received the fury in his train convey'd.
More search the time denied; for now the crew

So late dismiss'd by Azrael, came in sight,
Troubling the lurid air, and closing all
In sevenfold shades around them. From their eye
Zelohim 'scaping, sought with rapid wing
The guardian genius; and reveal'd at large
What of th' Apostate's journey, and the Fiend
He knew. Some mighty purpose seem'd to fill
His working thought: but whether he retired,
What time his dire companion sunk in earth,
He wist not; nor divined what name she bore,
Or office; nor why thus in night conceal'd.

Not unalarm'd by dread, the Guardian Queen,
When now she heard of Satan, and his mate,
Mused on the future first with anxious mind,
Presaging ruinous uproar. From her trance
Breaking at last, she bade Zelohim call
With speed around her all th' angelic quire:
He heard her, and obey'd. The band convened
Around their Sovereign, shrined on mantling clouds,
Broider'd with gold and azure. All awhile
Sat listening, when th' imperial power began:

'Know, ye of heav'nly race, though prosperous fate
'Yet crowns the host of Brutus, ills conceal'd
'Hang o'er them; and a formidable foe
'Directs them to the mark. The Prince of hell
'(Shrink not with terrour backwards!) now resides
'In yonder Isle, and brings a spirit unknown

'His direful implement to work new woes,
'And perfect schemes of ruin. He who rules
'Supreme, I trust, will by his own device
'Confound the deep designer, and as wont,
'Roll on that head the meditated fraud,
'That gave it birth. Meantime the task is yours
'To seek th' Intruder out, and watch unseen
'His steps. On every quarter look abroad;
'And bring intelligence when ye have found
'Th' Apostate, and what shape he brings from hell.'

THUS while she spoke, the heavenly band dispersed
Along th' aerial void, and left no place
Nor crevice, in their passage unexplored.
But vain their search. A foe more guileful far
Than they, within the midnight lay secure,
That as a mound inclosed him. Now he dwelt
Beneath th' incumbent eminence, whose base,
Rear'd on rude cliffs, o'erhung stupendous vaults,
The viper's loath'd abode, or snake obscene,
By man untrodden; now in mist dispersed,
Along the summit of the distant hill,
He mark'd the varying scenes that spread beneath
In either host, himself from sight conceal'd;
Or sought the fountains of the troubled main,
In its black bosom plunged; or utter'd sounds
Of death presageful, from the rolling tide
Unseen, at solemn intervals: or deep

Within the cleft of some mishapen trunk,
Cleaved by heaven's bolt, a monument of wrath!
With its abhorred inmates shrunk from view.
MEANWHILE, the Leaders of the Albian race,
Mix'd with Gerontes' gloomy band, convened
Around the furious Chief. Tamed, and dismay'd
The giant stood; nor now, as erst, in words
Boastful and impious spoke his thoughts impure:
Fallen was his vaunting, and his heart confess'd
Nought but its inborn hate, and native rage.
Pale, o'er his rude companions, as himself
Appall'd, and terror-struck, he cast his eyes:
But thence derived no joy. Their fiercest look'd
Abash'd; the others glared depress'd around;
Each wishing, in his neighbour's looks, to trace
That hope his own bespoke not. Vain desire!
One face of general dread o'erspread the throng.
ALONE the Chief of Albion knew a heart
Firm and unmoved; and with an eye serene
Advanced. Beside him old Abractes moved
Intrepid, calm, yet ardent to explore
What cause of import high provoked the war.
With these the Albian leaders took their seats
In full consult:—when rising in the midst,
Sedate, Androgeus thus address'd the throng:
'LORD of this mighty host, and ye who share
'Of each emprise; let rage a moment cease

'To sway your counsels. Temperate thought employ'd
'On themes of dubious import, seeks to know
'Whate'er may guide its course; and ere we meet
'Again yon host in arms, suggests demands
'That claim attention.—Say, what cause provoked
'This war with foes that seem of noble kind?
'Rush'd they at once to battle, and proposed
'No terms of peaceful league? Such conduct ill
'Beseems their Chief's experience, and his deeds,
'That seem by wisdom guided, and cool thought;
'Though great. Tell, if by violence or fraud
'Yourselves to battle roused th' indignant host,
'Impell'd by just resentment to avenge
'Some lawless act?—My counsel, and my hand
'Are yours, as justice calls to lift the spear,
'Or rude temerity requires the balm
'Of sound advice. I come for each prepared.'

He said.—Unwonted silence held the throng
A while suspended: till with aspect calm,
That breathed of seeming candour, Vortiger
Arose, and thus with temperate voice replied:

'We know thee, Chief, for wisdom far renown'd,
'As famed for prowess. Hear the cause of war.—
'Yon race, in silence to this shore convey'd,
'Spread o'er yon heights secure. The forest hid
'Their powers from sight; nor knew we whence they came,
'Or what their purpose; some superiour mind

'Assumed thy form, bold Gerion, and announced,
'That men of mighty name led forth a band
'Of chosen warriours, all in hostile guise
'Ranged on our plains, as if to kindle war,
'And hurl defiance on opposing foes.
'I met the hardy troop with peaceful end,
'Alone; yet for security prepared
'A few within the cavern's void conceal'd;
'Not to be used, till every gentler mean
'Fail'd of its aim.—I met them, thus in thought
'Resolved. But ere I spoke, one youthful Chief
'Discharged a dart like lightning, and reveal'd
'What passions fired their hearts, and arm'd their hands.
'SUDDEN the few conceal'd, around me came
'From their close covert. From the camp rush'd forth
'Its thousands clad in arms. No talk of peace
'Was heard. That young assailer laid in dust
'One of our God-like race, who yet on earth
'Lies unrevenged. With night the conflict ceased,
'With morn awaked. Their mightiest swept the plain.
'Thou know'st what next ensued, and hear'st the cause
'Of fight. Now speak thy purpose unrestrain'd.'
THUS spoke the giant, in ambiguous phrase
Veiling his dark designs, and half assumed
Fraudful, the majesty of truth. The throng
So late unlicensed, sat abash'd and still.
A while, Androgeus' pondering thought revolved

The scenes; revolved what means avail'd to tame
The fell to reason's lore: then thus replied:

'YON strangers, Chiefs, behold us as a crew
'Of fierce barbarians, nursed alone to blood;
'Who, should their messenger of peace approach,
'Might practise on his life. Hence, from the camp
'No herald tells their purpose:—unassured
'Of our resolves, they breathe revenge, and war.
'Twere glorious then, in our superiour kind,
'To vindicate our honour, to assert
'Our claim to virtue, as to martial power:
'Say, Chiefs, should we, one hour by reason ruled,
'Cast off the fierce barbarian, and descend
'To talk of peaceful league; and of this land
'Consign some distant region to an host,
'Whose arms may conquer what our voice denies;
'Is not the triumph ours?—By yielding thus,
'Not meanly, but of choice; as friends we fix
'A formidable race, favour'd of Jove,
'And, as it seems, improved in every art:
'Or rashly spurning what we hold in sight,
'And trusting arms alone; 'tis then the part
'Of heav'n to quell their pride; great Neptune roused
'To aid his injured sons, ruling the fight,
'Will whelm in ruin their presumptuous hope.

'IF glorying in your might, you falsely deem
'The task ignoble, or unsafe, to seek

'Alone the hostile tents;—in me, behold
'Who dares the deed! God from his throne surveys
'Th' upright with eye benignant; to their life
'Gives honour, and with glory crowns their end.
'SPEAK then your purpose, Leaders! Should you yield
'Consent, I journey with the dawn, prepared
'To meet the peers of yonder foes alone,
'Guardless, unarm'd:—but should your voice forbid
'Th' attempt; I lead not like an host of slaves,
'These noble bands to slaughter. Use your strength
'As best beseems. Our distant hills extend
'To us their wonted shade: thither we speed
'Once more, where never war nor discord reign'd.'
HE spoke: with different thoughts th' assembly heard
His words. The Albian Princes all elate
On their great ruler bent approving eyes.
But other thoughts and passions fir'd thy sons,
Gerontes! Dread, in some suppress'd their voice;
In some, amazement. But Romerus look'd
Indignant. In his troubled soul arose
Pride yet untamed, the thought of god-like force
That scorn'd to yield; and anger unsubdued
By each disastrous chance. Locrinus' might
O'erawed him; but he kept that awe conceal'd
Deep in his inmost heart. On his dark front
Ire, as he frown'd, and high resentment lower'd.

He rose, and fix'd on Albion's mighty peers
A scornful eye, that, ere he spoke, announced
His mind on war intent. His mates, prepared
To catch, and breathe his spirit, gazed around,
Eager to hear their Chieftain, and in hope
Triumphant, while they view'd his tower-like form.

THUS stood the scene; and party had disjoin'd
From this unhallow'd tribe their Albian friends:
But ere Romerus spoke, th' unfolding gate
Flew back. And lo! a stranger warriour came,
Clad as it seem'd in arms! In height beyond
The human form; of god-like port; and bold,
Yet stern of aspect! In his hand he shook
A sword, whose edge indented, bore the marks
Of peril greatly braved; and as he trode,
Sparks from his flaming mail checquer'd the void
Around with livid light, All stood aghast
And mute; when in the midst exposed to sight,
He raised a mighty arm, and thus began:

'KNOW, Chiefs, and cease your broils, superiour (Powers
'Conspire to whelm your foes. 'Tis vain to talk
'Of peace; prepare to meet them on the field
'In hostile guise. Nor dread Locrinus' hand,
'Thus name their mightiest, yet unmatch'd in fight,
'Myself will meet him, and before you drive
'Yon host, ere twice again the sun descend.

'Be firm: and trust the voice that seals their doom.'
He spoke; and subterraneous thunder shook
The cleaving earth, and through the smoke was seen
Blue fires ascending from the gulph below!
Sudden it closed as on impassive air,
And all was still around. Of all the throng
Androgeus singly stood unmoved. His thought
Divined not aught of happy: yet he paused,
As one in doubt, who, fearful to offend,
Confides not idly, nor defies. He stood
Unawed; and dubious thus express'd his mind.
'Lord of this heav'n-protected host, (for hope
'Deems heav'n their guardian) of th' Eternal's will
'Man's dark and narrow ken inquires in vain.
'Tried by the signals of Olympian Jove,
'Yon minister I deem not of the quire
'Celestial. Sinking to Tartarean gulphs,
'Not borne aloft on pure empyreal air;
'He seems of Pluto's gloomy race, and comes
'Perhaps with fixed purpose to deceive,
'Not to restore the fight. Yet mortal man
'Oft errs in judging: nor the task be mine
'Rashly to act, though doubtful; from infirm,
'Perhaps misguided censure. Hence I grant
'A day to battle, if my brave compeers
'Approve the thought; but should the foe prevail,

'Your choice be then the means by me devised,
'Should aught avail, to ward impending fate.'
THUS he. Deep silence spoke consent in all.
Th' assembly rose; while each prepared with morn
To rouse their powers to combat, and efface,
By some transcendent deeds, their former shame.

BRITANNIA.

BOOK X.

THE ARGUMENT.

At a council of the TROJANS, EVANDER proposeth, that a select party should be placed in ambush, in a remote part of the forest; in order to act, either in assisting their friends, or in attacking the enemy, as occasion might require. EUGENIUS, and ALBANUS, are again entrusted with this service, as being best instructed in the nature of the ground. BRUTUS, apprised early of the motions of the enemy, prepares for an engagement. The celestial spirits assemble, and occupy their departments. But in the mean time, AZRAEL apprehensive of the power of LOCRINUS, prepares to carry the purpose of SATAN, respecting him, into immediate execution. With this view, in the form of ALCESTES, he prevails upon LOCRINUS, to persuade ALMERIA, to put herself under the protection of his friend, in the event of any sudden attack. While LOCRINUS is absent on this business, the battle continues upon the whole to the disadvantage of the TROJANS; although SATAN who had animated ROMERUS, flies precipitately from the eye of GOD.

ERE morn awaked, while yet the baffled foes
Of Brutus knew dismay; the conquering Chiefs
Elate, and joyful, sought their Leader's tent;
All proud to hail the Prince, whose steady hand

Had quell'd Androgeus, and the man divine
Who foil'd Romerus' force. Amid th' acclaim
Of shouting hosts they pass'd, and felt their praise;
The hero's noblest meed, so dearly gain'd.

MEANWHILE, Almeria, (Brutus gave command
In secret) watchful of Locrinus' step,
Advanced with grace ineffable, that held
All fix'd in deep delight. A laurel wreath
She bore, adorn'd with flowers, and blushing, placed
The varied garland on his head. Her brow
Imperial beauty crown'd; and such her smile,
As plays eternal, in poetic song,
On Hebe's dewy lip. Locrinus gazed
In speechless transport; while the fair beheld
His strong emotion, with an eye that pierced
His heart; and as she gave th' encircling wreath:
'Receive,' she cried, 'from me the boon that speaks
'Each Leader's full consent, reserved to crown
'Worth, as thine own distinguish'd.' As she spoke,
She turn'd with virgin majesty; and quick,
O'er her bright features dropt the mantling veil;
Then, ere the hero, yet entranced, had clasp'd
Her form, delighted, to his breast, withdrew.

NOT more Leander, while his naked arm
Furrow'd the roaring Hellespont, and stemm'd
Nightly the watery waste, what time he saw,
By the pale languor of the lunar orb,

The prize of all his toils, th' expecting maid,
Waving her snowy hand, and to the tower
Now near, inviting his approach,—rejoiced;
His long, long perils, and his loved reward
At once in sight: nor, when he reach'd the shore,
Felt higher transport, than Locrinus knew
At this blest instant. Ah! presumptuous! blind
To fate so near!—In one revolving day,
What woe, what anguish wait to pay the hour
Of momentary bliss, so dearly won!

YET, in his inmost heart the hero lock'd
His joy, and god-like to th' assembly moved;
Where Brutus, rising in the midst, began:

'CHIEFS of this glorious host! your deeds demand
'Just praise. Ye now behold the great reward
'Placed full in sight, that crowns the warriour's toils.
'Yet, Princes, perils, to th' appointed goal
'Forbid our near approach. Our barbarous foes,
'Gerontes, and his mates, though taught to dread
'Our might, and humbled in their hopes, retain
'Their native rage; and should we pierce the depth
'Of yonder wood, will in the last extreme,
'(Their fort in sight, and pledges lodged within,
'All whispering to the heart;) collect their force,
'By nature's silent eloquence impell'd,
'To guard their sacred rights. Th' auxiliar tribes,
'That seem of manners more refined, and move

'As we, to battle in refulgent mail;
'Perhaps by reason's temperate lore subdued,
'May leave their rude companions, and confirm
'With us close league.—To gain this utmost end
'Of our attempts, and stand even in th' extreme
'Of adverse fate secure: prudence must guide,
'In action, counsels by the wise devised.
'SPEAK then, ye Princes, what your thoughts approve
'In this great cause, with freedom. Say, what means
'Avail the best, for conquest or defence:
'Where force and bold assault may be employ'd
'With just effect, declare: Or, if ye hope
'By art to triumph, saving in our course
'The waste of blood, give then your purpose words.
'I wait to hear what works the general weal.'

HE ceased:—and silence held the listening throng
A while suspended, when the Lesbian King,
As one awaked from deepest thought, arose,
At last; and, skill'd to form the wisest plan
As fit to paint its happiest use, replied:

'GREAT Prince, ere final conquest crown our toils,
'Peril and death await us on the field:
'Nor, though repulsed, will yonder barbarous host
'Cease, in their own defence, to charge our powers
'With all their force.—Yet unsubdued they stand,
'Breathing defiance. Comes from either Chief
'Of yonder bands, the messenger of peace,

'Propounding terms of concord?—Other thoughts
'Employ their leaders, if I deem aright;
'And this deep calm forebodes a tempest near.
'HENCE, what their Chieftain not in guileful arts
'Untaught, essay'd so late; some God reveal'd
'Our purpose, when th' adventurous pair escaped
'His snare; th' occasion calls us now to try.
'YON woodland, fit to shield within its void
'A band in ambush placed; supplies at once
'The ground, and points the mean that may avail
'The most to give annoyance. Thither a train
'Convey'd, may scan the varying scenes of war,
'Themselves unseen; prepared to trench the foe
'With sudden inroad, unapprised; or reach
'Their fort, and with resistless might assail,
'While mann'd with weak defendants, in the heat
'Of desperate battle, as the Monarch guides
'Their course by signals, or intelligence
'With early care imparted.—What the time
'Claims of expert design, may be essay'd
'To break a force, by hosts inclosed in vain.
'But grant th' advice received,' (for every eye
Glanced approbation;) 'say, illustrious peers,
'Who merits best to rule th' intrepid band?
'No common thought the perilous scheme requires,
'But cautious prudence, wisdom to discern,
'When in assault to rush, and when to cease

From fight; a spirit in the strife unmoved,
And skill to suit each action, when required,
To what the time, or varying scenes demand.
'ONCE, busy memory yet surveys the past:
'I led to war the Lesbian race, to quell
'The sons of Clazomenia. All in war
'With equal ardour mix'd, and long, its end
'Remain'd from all conceal'd.—At last the foe,
'Out-numbering far our thinner bands, prevail'd,
'And headlong drove us to the roaring main.
Not far, a hill, o'erspread with branching pines,
Shaded the plain beneath: amid its shades
'A cohort lurk'd in ambush, as I gave
'Command; beneath experienced chiefs disposed;
'Prepared to rush with fury on their bands,
'What time they dream'd of conquest; and o'erpower
'Their boasted force at once. Deep in my heart,
'I lock'd the purpose from the general view.
'MEANTIME, the mighty Clazomenian Prince,
'Great Epialtes, chear'd his shouting host;
'And towering dreadful, in their front, advanced
'Secure of triumph. In his full career
'I met the warriour: but, while shield on shield
'Crash'd horrent; down the echoing mountain, burst
'Our ambush'd troop! The shores, the main, return'd
'Their loud acclaiming voice. Even now, I mark
'Their course; while either host a moment staid

'In still suspence! Far spreading in their van,
'At last the Lesbian ensign stands display'd!
'The scale of conquest turns! Our foes aghast,
'Deem from its side the cleaving rock to pour
'Abroad the sons of fire; while ours as Gods
'Beheld them, and in silence eyed their deeds
'Amazed. The trembling throng before them fled.
'Even Epialtes, struck with sudden dread,
'Turn'd, but in vain. We seized him, and elate,
'Bore with rich trophies to the Lesbian Isle.
'NOT that I boast of deeds of old atchieved,
'Or prate from garrulous age; this antient tale
'Now to remembrance rises, and employs
'My voice. By just example to confirm
'My purpos'd scheme, I now recount the past:
'Th' attempt once made, what brought reward and fame,
'With Jove befriending now, may issue still
'In honour.—Judge, ye warriours, of the whole.'

THUS kindling into transient youth, the sage
Proposed his counsel, and enforced by proof
With ardour urged; as memory scanned the past,
Glancing oblique on long-forgotten scenes:
And gain'd assent from all. No eye was sunk,
Or voice infirm, as from suspended thought,
Or judgment unassured. Alone, the choice
Of leaders equal to a task so great,
Perplex'd their minds. In merit, each conceived

Himself to stand pre-eminent; and next
Himself, th' Athenian Prince. He, of renown
Eager, and conscious of superiour worth,
Though veil'd from sight, with modest action rose,
And unassuming, thus serene, began:

'For you, ye mightier Chiefs, who toil in fight,
'Meeting the rough and perilous front of war;
'This meaner business were unfit. Our host
'Would miss the sword wide-wasting, and the shield,
'Behind whose ample shade they stood secure,
'So late. Ye Leaders then, the task be mine,
'Once more with Alban, if approved, to dare
'This peril.—We already know the depth
'Of yonder woodland.—I, though tried in fight,
'Boast not Locrinus' prowess, or of deeds
'Like thine, great Camber! And my young compeer,
'Of age yet immature, though great in arms,
'Yields but the promise of a hero's fame,
'As yet unbraced with vigour, to assail
'Yon giant's mightiest.—Leagued with him, whate'er
'Of good from concord springs, and souls that hold
'A steady union, by no spreading cloud
'Of dark suspicion dimm'd, may crown perhaps
'United efforts, but of arduous deeds
'Know, Chiefs, your praises are the best reward.'

Thus he. Young Alban caught the word elate:
And instant, ere the Monarch spoke, pronounced

His glad assent: yet to his sire's command,
Profess'd to yield obedience unrestrain'd.
As o'er his feather'd young, prepared to fly,
The parent eagle hangs; and while the bird
Yet trembling eyes the dizzy steep, or turns
Full to the noon-day sun his steady gaze;
Knows his own race with joy; nor checks the hope
That swells his heart, though yet afraid to trust
His inexperience on th' aerial void,
Mounting such height. 'Twas thus the Monarch fared,
Weighing the various scenes: yet soon resolved
To grant their joint request, serene replied:
'WARRIOURS, we yield consent. Again select
'The band that from the forest's depth, so late
'Return'd unconquer'd; and in yonder shade
'Dispose as best befits. Let one remain
'Still near its verge, to mark the signs that tell
'Our purpose; while the others stand prepared,
'To burst impetuous on the flying foe,
'If chased; or, if victorious, to repel
'Their rage, and on their rear in thunder break,
'What time they sweep the field. Avert, great Jove,
'That need! An ensign waved aloft in air,
'Affords your signal. On the right beheld,
'It shows us conquerors; fluttering on the left,
'It marks the triumph of the hostile powers.
'If seen in quick progression, then assail

'Their fort, undaunted. But if lost to view,
'Know ruin, heav'n forbid the sign, impends!
'Seek then the camp with speed.—For what remains,
'Ere yet we meet once more, the hostile band
'In desperate fight; let all with food repair,
'Exhausted nature. Short repose prepares
'The brave for action. Strengthen'd thus, ye wake
'With morn to fight; and heaven dispose its end!'

He ceased. Each leader from th' assembly moved,
Pondering the scenes at hand; and wish'd to raise,
Each in his little troop, the noble flame
Of emulative worth. None dream'd of flight,
Of yielding, none. All snatch'd a warriour's meal
In haste; then careless, shared the gift of sleep,
Ardent, to wield with early morn the spear.

Thus they. But other business held employ'd
The youthful mates. Around them, stood disposed
Their former friends, exulting in the hope
Of some distinguish'd act, in thought atchieved;
Such firm affiance in their well-known guides
Impress'd each heart. Beneath the cope of night
They trode in silence, ceasing near the wood
Their march; yet with the dawn intent to ply
Their work, presaging all, successful end.

Meanwhile, the giants' barbarous shouts awaked
The Trojan Prince. He cast his eyes abroad;
And on the distant orient, saw the cloud

With saffron tinged. He mark'd it, and with speed
Singled Albinus out, who led to war
The Lyrnessean troops, beneath their Prince
Adrastus, famed afar. He knew the man,
Born with a heart undaunted, and a mind
Endow'd with steady thought; nor less renown'd
For deeds, than known for swiftness, and the sight
Piercing and keen, that, as at hand, beholds
Scenes yet remotely placed. To him apart,
The monarch thus in gentle words began.

'To thee, Albinus, known in many a scene,
'I trust a perilous task. Thou hear'st the shouts
'Of barbarous foes, announcing, if I judge
'Aright, defiance. Mixt with Albion's sons,
'Perhaps the crew, though furious, may assume
'Some face of discipline. I wish to learn
'Their purpose; whether yet they come, resolved
'Again to meet our host in open war,
'On yonder field; or on the space beyond
'The forest, stand around their fort convened,
'Collecting all their vigour, for a last
'And desperate effort. Thou, with speed, repair
'To yon black wood, observant whence their shouts
'Arise;—if hither with offensive aim
'They bend their course, mark, if thou canst, their rout,
'And numbers, by the sun's increasing light.
'But on the sons of Albion, chiefly fix

'Thine eye attentive; watchful, while they aid
'The giant race, if all with ardour move,
'Or seem divided;—or with tardy pace
'Advance, unwilling to the work.—With feet
'Fleet as the wild hart, hie thee to the verge
'Of yonder wilderness: thence hold thy course
'With guarded step. Be cautious, and secure.'

THUS spoke the Chief. Lyrnessus' warriour heard;
And lightly springing, left the camp behind,
And reach'd the forest's bound. There, screen'd from sight;
Prying, he mark'd a path, and listening, moved
Onward, and steady held his end in view.

THIS pass'd, while yet the Albian rulers, far
Apart, encamping in the sheltering vale,
Close by the bank on Sturia's gentle stream,
Slept with their host secure. With morn, they waked
Again to arms; and on the plain beheld
Their dire associates spread. Before the crew,
Once more Gerontes and Romerus tower'd,
Yet unsubdued, and breathing horrid war.
As when impregn'd with fuell'd vapours, heaves
Thy coast, Sicilia, or, Calabria, thine;
Its broad base rocking:—ere the flame ascends,
Is heard a voice that rolls along the void,
Announcing future woe!—From these, such sounds
Portending danger, met Albinus' ear,
Still gathering on the wind.—He paused, he gazed

Heedful around him; and at last, beheld,
Yet half-disclosed, the gleam of dazzling arms,
Seen like the solar orb, amid the shade
Of foliage, chequering, as he sinks to rest,
The sylvan scene. A scanty space o'erpass'd,
He saw the hosts advancing all in arms,
Of direful aspect; marshall'd on the plain,
In face, and forward gesture undismay'd:
He saw; and of their purpose now assured,
Turn'd unobserved, and measur'd back his way.

Soon to his own, th' adventurous Chief return'd
Untouch'd. Array'd they stood for instant fight,
Beneath their leaders, darkening all th' ascent,
For yet they moved not from the height; all clear'd
His path, receding back. He sought the King
With hasty feet, and thus rehearsed his tale.

'Observant, mighty leader, of thy words,
'I pierced the depth of yonder wood; and saw
'Ranged on its farther side the hostile bands.
'These, if I rightly judge, with one consent
'Advance, to match us on the field again,
'In open war. Even now, yon shout proclaims
'Their power, their numbers, and approach. Some God
'Supports, and chears their spirits, else depress'd;
'And holds in union, nations so disjoin'd
'In manners, as in arms.—If aught remains,
'That claims this heart, or willing hand, declare.'

He said. The monarch with applause dismiss'd
The friend long tried, approved in every deed;
Who inly pleased, rejoin'd his kindred train.
Meantime, the Guardian of the sea-beat Isle,
With heaven's bright sons, descending to the plain,
Beheld each opening scene. Before the King,
Splendent she tower'd in panoply divine,
Unknown to mortal ken; and from her eyes,
That rolling, sparkled with ethereal fires,
The demons shrunk aghast. The choir she mark'd
Around assembling of celestial minds,
Spontaneous, and to each assign'd his task,
With joy embraced. Zelohim, Astor seized
Their posts, intent, from meditated guile
To guard the mightiest of the Trojan host,
In native prowess else, and arms secure.
Heaven's other inmates, to no spot confined,
Where'er the battle swerved, prepared to fly
With ready wings, all ardent for command.
Of leaders dreadful in the field of fame,
When now the legions stood exposed to view,
Camber alone was wanting. Him, the sire,
Prescient of peril, left to guard the camp,
With Lesbia's venerable Prince, to sway,
By sober counsel, his impetuous mind;
And tame his headlong courage. Much he wish'd,
To meet once more Romerus, and subdue

The giant's pride; but to great Brutus' will
He gave a forced consent. Their guards disposed
Around the camp, each leader took his place;
And from the ramparts saw th' unfolding scenes.

ERE yet the god-like monarch led his host
Once more to combat, on the ground he pour'd
A due libation, and invoked with vows
Each Godhead known. He heard with thankful heart
Propitious thunders roll, though far removed,
That show'd a distant, but successful end.
Light was each warriour's heart, and firm his hand;
(Ah! blind and reckless of the woe to come!)
While all in prospect eyed the flying foe.

WHILE thus employ'd, Gerontes rush'd to sight
Rageful, as he who gorged the land of Nile
With strangers blood, what time the Son of Jove
In combat met the tyrant, and his crew,
Braving their force at once.—Romerus near,
Defied the strength of armies, as he glared
Around, and scann'd each battle. At his side,
Gerontes' daughter led her kindred train,
She, with the rude mace arm'd, with arrows these,
That rive the knobbed oak. Androgeus strode,
As wont, before his Albians: in their rear
The numbers, closely ranged, o'erspread the field.

DEVISING plans of ruin in his thought,
Still bent on evil, Azrael receiv'd the host

Apart; when full in sight Locrinus came,
Confounding all his hope! As one he seem'd,
Raised by th' Eternal to some great emprise,
Nor but for conquest framed; and acts divine.
Each look, each graceful movement, as he led
His own to battle, took the demon's eye,
And held him, with alternate rage and dread,
Impress'd. As when a thief in durance kept,
And fetter'd to some post, or naked wall
With iron wedges; turning from the scene,
Horrent and rude, creeps to his grate, and views,
Life-quelling sight! the man that wrought him woe,
Reclining freely at his ease, perhaps
With meditated ill. He springs to seize
His foe, forgetful of the galling chain,
And ribs, that barring egress, mock th' attempt:
Thus fared the fiend. Awhile he eyed the Prince
With thought of instant vengeance; but controul'd
By power divine, stood chafing. To his mind,
Long musing deep, the last expedient rose,
Framed by the author of all ill, and now
To be essay'd with speed: for as they mark'd
Locrinus, in each face he saw dismay,
And fear in every heart. Remembrance waked
Such deeds, and such his port, and strength divine!
THUS pondering, in Alcestes' form he deem'd
To scape Zelohim's watchful eye. That form

He took, and to Locrinus, seem'd the friend
He loved: before the Chief, he stood confess'd
In wonted guise, and artful thus began:
'PRINCE, in thy kindling eyes, I see display'd
'The fate of yonder host. Yet while they fly
'Dispersed, some desperate band, athirst for blood,
'Or eager on the female train to wreak
'Their rage, so loosely guarded, may assail
'The camp with sudden inroad, and insnare,
'Forbid it Jove! Almeria in their toils.
'Her if thou seek'st to shield, hear what my thought
'Suggests heaven-prompted, studious of thy weal.
'FAR in yon wilderness, a cavern lies,
'Screen'd in the forest's umbrage, and unmark'd
'By human feet; nor but by me descried,
'Who traced the windings of the woodland waste
'That reach the deep recess.—O'er this wide land,
'What tribes, what people barbarous, and untamed,
'Perhaps behind us rule some great domain;
'Who, while we mix in battle, may assault
'Our camp, or bear an unresisting throng,
'Our wives, our children off;—say, friend, can one
'Of yonder host declare, or what the foe
'Driv'n to their last resource, by force, or guile
'May dare in desperate act, though Camber guards
'Yon mounds!—Hence, if my counsel aught avails,
'Thou on the instant to Almeria speed,

'And warn the fair, else shrinking, to confide
'In thy Alcestes, following when he calls,
'His course;—from danger thus she rests secure.'

THUS while the demon spoke, Zelohim heard
His words indignant, but by heaven with-held,
Forbore to chastise the presumptuous hope,
That in the face of noon-day, urged the fiend
To dare so bold a deed. He left the Chief
To act uninfluenced, what his thought impell'd.

NOR yet, though near, the nations rush'd to fight;
All stood expectant of the word, and eyed
The Dardan Prince, who pausing, ere he spoke,
Heard from the central bands th' expected call
At last, and saw the meeting hosts engage.

AS when the fleet hound, flying holds in sight
The timid hare, that quivers on the verge
Of fate; when now he deems the prize his own,
Sees recent from her hills, the bounding doe
Light-leaping on his track; with beating heart
He turns: impatience thus, and dread to lose
The nymph he loved, quell'd in Locrinus' soul
The warriour's fire, that else had whirl'd him on,
Even with the speed of thought, to meet the foe.
Yet, bursting on the Albian troops, he broke
Their close arrangement; clearing with his sword
A path to conquest, ere he left the field.
To Phrenor then he gave command, to lead

His Dardan troop, then promised quick return,
And to the camp, deep-musing, held his way.
ARRIVED, the hero pass'd the guards in haste,
That compass'd as a mound the mighty space;
And sought Almeria's tent. Almeria mark'd
The Chief's approach; nor knowing what recall'd,
Thus soon, the first of warriours from the field,
Alarm'd beheld him, and surprised. He saw
What mix'd emotions swell'd her heart by turns;
And ardent, wish'd to banish every fear
At once. Advancing quick, he press'd her hand,
With warm, but sudden act; and thus bespoke:
'KNOW, fairest of thy sex, to shield from ill
'Thy life high-prized, I leave the field of fame
'An hour; unheedful even of passing blame,
'By deeds to be effaced. I go to plunge
'In scenes of war, perhaps to drive the foe,
'Half-quell'd already, to their last retreat;
'Not there to leave them unassail'd. Should rout
'O'erwhelm the giant race; yet where the crew
'May roam dispersed, and eager to avenge
'On thinner bands, that guard a feebler train,
'Their ruin, who can judge, or say what race
'O'erspreading far behind, a boundless land,
'May seek the camp inflamed with lust of spoil,
'And seize whate'er they meet! Heed then the mean
'Devised to save thee in the perilous hour.

'A CAVE, within the woodland's deepest shade,
'Screen'd from intruding feet, Alcestes knows,
'Who with the bands of Camber, and the train
'Of Lesbia's venerable Prince, remains
'To guard these mounds.—Him, should he call thee hence,
'Obey; for hazard imminent, and great,
'Impends.—I fly to join, should peril press
'Thy brave defenders, and repel the foe.'

HE said.—Almeria not unpleased, beheld
The Prince; nor of his love unheedful, felt
The blush that warm'd her cheek.—'Thy care demands
'My thanks,' with down-cast eye the virgin spoke,
'Yet hope suggests, that not to one confined,
'As its sole end, that generous care extends
'To all the helpless unrestrain'd.'—'To all,'
The Prince replied, 'great Brutus' thought attends;
'Mine now confined within a narrow sphere,
'Regards Almeria's weal. Even now, the fight
'Commands me hence. Imperial fair, I go,
'By deeds to merit, as their noblest boon,
'Thy praise.' The nymph now graceful bow'd assent:
Nor longer held him from the war. He rose,
Strode from the camp, and with exulting heart
Rush'd on, to rule the tumult of the field.

WHILE thus they talk'd, Azzazel, as the Lord
Of heaven permitted, bade the battle rage
With licence unconfined. In every heart

That mighty angel roused the latent fires.
As first in power, in acts, the monarch shone,
And high renown, distinguish'd. As the sun
Splendent and calm in his superiour sphere,
When thunders roar beneath, his influence spread
O'er all his host. He fires, exhorts, defends,
Inspires the timid, checks th' impetuous deed
Of courage rashly bold; th' oppress'd relieves;
And gives at once example, and command.

Nor less employ'd, Androgeus, with his friend
Great Segonax combined, maintain'd the day,
Still hoping aid divine. They look'd around;
And while they miss'd Locrinus, felt their hearts
Raised with new hope: of peaceful league, no more
They dream'd; but meeting in his full career
The monarch, while Androgeus stay'd his course,
His mate, with ready hand collecting all
His bands dispersed, in every spirit roused
His own indignant ire. Anger, and hate,
New guests, now first inspired his noble mind,
Else there no inmates: for he deem'd the foe
A barbarous nation, versed alone in war,
And bent by force, not gentler means, to gain
What purpose they devised. Hence, on their host
He hurl'd defiance, and suppress'd the voice
Of pity, melting at the suppliant's prayer.

Now flaming wide, the radiant orb of day

Illumined heaven and earth. Beneath their Chiefs
Disposed, the host of Albion bore the shock
With dauntless hearts, of Troy's united powers.
But thro' the ranks of Sparta closely wedged,
And Lycia's shrinking troops, Romerus broke
Like thunder, through the thin and gleaming air,
Spreading destruction in his walk.—The bands
As wont, all fled before him. Lysias then,
And Hyperantes bled; Erastus sunk
In dust;—and sudden ruin heap'd the field.

Meantime, the Lord of Nature, who pervades
All space; through every form beheld the rout
Of hell's dread monarch. From angelic ken
Though shrouded closely; and in hope, from all,
Before th' omniscient eye, he stood reveal'd
Clear as the noon-day sun. Th' Eternal saw,
What time Romerus, like a tempest sent
To desolate the earth, swept from its place
An host; the fiend even from his own conceal'd,
Bracing the giant's mighty arm, and felt
In every nerve, with triple strength endow'd.

Hence, while the Chieftain's looks, his bands o'er-(power'd
All force, confounding nations leagued in war,
Whose leaders stood aghast! Th' Omnipotent
Bounded the power of Satan, as he tames
The troubled ocean. To his sinking heart
He look'd dismay! Th' Arch-felon, from his prey

Withdrew discomfited: not more abash'd,
Nor less reluctant, than the Legion, call'd
From their deep haunt by Mary's Son divine,
When rushing on the swines' polluted herd,
Enraged; they whirl'd them headlong down the steep,
And whelm'd them sudden in the gulph. No more
Urged by the demon now, Romerus braved
His foes; yet glorying still in native strength,
As he of Gaza, when the pillar'd dome
Shook in his strong embracement; undismay'd,
He swung his mighty ash, and show'd the camp
To his fierce mates. His mates pursued his step,
Clearing a bloody path, and clamorous, raised
A shout by echoes borne from hill to hill.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK XI.—

THE ARGUMENT.

LEONTIA, instigated by ROMERUS, falls with her followers upon the LYDIAN troops, of whom, with their Leader EVOEMON, she kills the greater number. Having pursued the remainder almost to the camp, AZRAEL takes advantage of this incident to execute his design against ALMERIA. With this purpose, he goes to her in the form of ALCESTES, LOCRINUS' friend, and says that he had come by his order to conduct her to a place of security. She follows him, and is led into a wilderness, where the Demon leaves her. She wanders during some time desolate and melancholy; and at last falls asleep near the brink of a little rill. She is awaked by the music of a lute; is accosted by her Guardian Angel in the habit of a Shepherd; and is by him conducted to the cell of a Druid, with whom he leaves her in charge.

CLOSE by Romerus' side, while thus he roll'd
Onward the fight, Leontia plied by turns
Her darts; by turns, rush'd, with the rifted rock
Poised in her hand, impetuous on the foe,

By headlong rage impell'd; her weapons oft
She changed, and oft her purpose; turning short
From conquests dearly earn'd, as some new prize,
That glitter'd in her view, decoy'd her step,
Giddy, yet desperate in assault. Behind,
A female race, inured to scour the wild
With their fell mates, horrific throng! appear'd;
All arm'd with shafts, the terror of the boar,
And shagged wolf. Their shouts, their gleaming eyes
Struck dread to every heart; of order void,
They throng'd o'er all tumultuous. Sparta's sons
Led by their glorious Chief, had sent the crew
Backward repulsed. Around Romerus, hence
They press'd; yet fought with no determined aim.

TIRED with his wild allies, the giant wish'd
To give them work apart, yet hold their force
Employ'd. Thus bent, he scann'd with heedful eye
The host of Brutus; and beheld at last,
On its right wing, the Lydian troops, disposed
Beneath Evoemon. As the countless swarm
Of insects, fluttering in the solar blaze,
With ever-varying dies, that strike the sight
Afar, and hold it wondering;—from the arms
Of Lydia's numbers, shields with broider'd gold
O'erlaid, and helms, with many a spangling plume
Gay-gleaming; hues thus various mark'd a spoil
In view enticing, rich, and to be gain'd

Perhaps, from weak and unresisting hands.

THESE seen, Romerus, pointing to the throng
Now by Leontia scann'd with heedful eye,
Thus spoke in haste. 'Thou seest, my arm prevails
'Unaided here. Thou, with thy female bands,
'On yonder troops that hold a distant war,
'Known by their arms that sparkle in the sun,
'Make bold, and resolute assault. These, driven
'Before thy followers, to the camp pursue.
'Thither I bend my course, and mean to meet
'Thee, with Gerontes, and our conquering powers.'
THUS he.—The fiery Amazon beheld,
And call'd around her warring train: The train
Obey'd her leading voice, reckless of aught
Beside. Convened, she drew them from the shock
Of meeting hosts; and showing, as their prey,
The troops of Lydia, gay with dancing plumes,
Even here, that sparkling, lured the female eye;
Fetch'd a short compass, on the space behind
The charging nations, and approach'd the foe.
As when the fragment of some broken rock,
By thunder rent, and by tempestuous winds
Hurl'd from the spire of Teneriff, descends,
Shaking the world of waters in its fall
Afar; while to the shock, Canarian Isles
Tremble through all their coasts: thus rush'd the throng
Headlong; and thus, the Lydian bands recoil'd

Stunn'd by their looks, and shouts announcing war.
THOUGH weak, the Lydians stood, by Brutus' care,
Ranged in close phalanx. Shield o'ershading shield,
Opposed a barrier to th' assailing foes,
Unbroken yet; nor aught the tribe beheld
To meet their fury; but portended spears,
Or winged javelins, in their forms that fix'd
Deep wounds, though deem'd in shagged vests secure.
Zophiel beneath, his wings expanded, held
With El-Moraïm, of ethereal race
Close-leagued, the Lydians as their charge, untouch'd;
In arms that awed even Ramiel, though esteem'd
In hell, the keenest of th' infernal powers.
Hence, though no warriour match'd in desperate fight
Thy force, Leontia, or Argantia's hand;
Yet nought, while yet the heavenly pair remain'd
In sight, avail'd their fierce assault. In vain,
Rocks shook the mound; and flying darts, in vain
Shower'd on th' uninjured covert: unsubdued,
Though shock'd, the Lydians kept the throng at bay.
BUT now the fatal hour, when heaven decreed
To sweep an idle and voluptuous race
From earth, chastising, by inglorious hands,
Their former deeds, arrived. A cloud o'ercast
The scene; while yet the spirits celestial marr'd
Whate'er Leontia, and her mates design'd.
A seraph, flaming on its void, appear'd

With heaven's high mandate fraught. He gave his charge
In few. 'Ye ministers divine! retire:
'Nor shield devoted heads, but hence expel
'Afar th' infernal messenger.' The pair
Heard, and obey'd at once; nor Ramiel stay'd
Their threat'ned onset, but retiring, left
To fate th' eventful hour. The Lydian host
Grew paler, as the parting guides withdrew,
Dread-struck; though yet unconscious of the cause,
That wrought dismay in every heart! Their hands
Now feebly shook the dart: their foes assumed
A ruder aspect. To the battle rush'd
Gerontes' daughter, high in hope, to gain
The strangers' spoils, and direful as the fiend
Of night, when howling in the North, he swells
The long loud blast that whistles round the walls,
A dire presage!—Her eyes, her voice, announced
The fierce conflicting passions, when she turn'd
Around; and to her listening mates began:

'Why wage we, friends, with yonder reptile herd,
'A distant war? Fling all your bows aside;
'And grasp the warriours mace; or with what store
'The place affords, assail them. Mark, what spoils
'They bear! what plumes, that sparkle in the sun,
'Dance on their heads! how, like the Albian race,
'But brighter far, they blaze in burnish'd arms,
'Wrought in the strangers' land!—Their camp contains

'More gorgeous trophies.—Dash we quick to hell
'The tribe, but first obtain an envied prize;
'Myself will lead the way.'—All heard, and cast,
Indignant on the field, their useless bows;
And seizing, what the younger race supplied
Of arms, the broken rock, or mass unshaped
Of solid ore, or mace, or shagged stone,
Burst on the foe tempestuous. Such the shock
Of thunder, breaking on the cloudy spire
Of Caucasus, or Ida; when it roars
Through their black woods, and hurls them to the vale.
SAY, thou, who spreadst before the ken of thought
Scenes of eventful fate, that hold entranced
Imagination's vivid eye; what rout
Now whelm'd the Lydian host; and what the hands
That wrought their final ruin! In the van
Of fight, Leontia tower'd; her mates around,
Close as the ears on some autumnal field.
Amid the storm of war, horrific glared
Their vengeful leader. Fierce, along the bands
Of Lydia scattering, swept her ready hand:
Meres, and rich Hydaspes, felt its power:
On one, the mace descending, quench'd at once
Life's little spark; and one an iron mass,
Dash'd on the shatter'd cheek-bone, sunk on earth
Quivering. Tigranes, panting by their side,
Lay soil'd in dust. Him, by his burnish'd helm,

With orient hues, effulgent o'er his peers,
Known in the walks of fight; while yet he moved
A pageant, not a warriour, and beheld
With pride his sword that sparkled in the sun,
Argantia met, Medusa-like; and seized
The chief recoiling back, and on the shape
Glaring with haggard eyes.—She grasps, she rears
His frame: and in her strong embracement strains,
Till the freed spirit seeks impassive air.
Memnon with these, and Tissaphernes, shared
One common fate. Before their native bands,
On earth the warriours lay. Their swords, though bathed
In hostile blood, had reach'd no vital part;
Heaven check'd the weapons, and the chiefs confess'd
In dust, Leontia's triumph, and her power.

Driven from their place, the Lydian Princes throng'd
Around Evœmon. In close phalanx, there
The bravest stood, and to the camp, forbade
The foes approach, though now, disclosed to sight,
It shew'd at hand, a rich and tempting prey.

As he, the fierce Thessalian, when endow'd
By fell Medea, from Aœtes sprung,
With nerves impenetrably strong, o'erturn'd
The bulls of Colchos, and undaunted, bore
Away the fleece of gold, his glorious prize;
Thus fearless, on the foe Leontia burst,
Fired with the lust of spoil; thus on their chief

Evœmon, wreak'd her fury. Rising high
Above the host, she mark'd afar the Prince,
Known by his flaming mail, inlaid with gold,
And plumage dancing on the wind.—She saw,
And as her victim, seal'd his instant doom.
HER, thus resolved, and chearing to the work
Her mates, the Lydian sped. Her voice, her eyes,
Announced her purpose; and himself its aim.
As stands the heart-struck mariner aghast,
Scanning th' etherial azure, when he sees
The first dark spot impregn'd with living fire,
From Madagascar, or the sultry shores
Of Guinea, spreading to the noon-day sun;
The flame dim-gliding, and the hissing gale
That wheels to every point, proclaim at hand
The dire tornado, borne on all the winds,
To whirl his light barque on its wing: amazed
He stood, and trembling thus. No friend appear'd
Of force to match Leontia, or of skill
To ward th' impending peril. From her eye
He turn'd; while headlong speed, by fear impell'd,
Now bore him to the camp. The foe beheld
His flight enraged; and fleet along the plain
Skimm'd with light feet; then ceasing, swung around
A stone, and hurl'd it at his head. He fell
Prostrate, and writhing with convulsive throes,
Sobb'd out his spirit. Universal rout

Ensued, and all fled devious o'er the field.

MEANWHILE, the demon o'er the varying face
Of combat cast his eye. The scatter'd host
Of Lydia flying, and the furious band
Bent to assail the camp, before him brought
Th' Arch-felon's dire device, and show'd the time
At hand, to part Locrinus from his own.

THAT chief return'd, fell Azrael, with dismay
Traced in his rout. He saw Zelohim shield
The favour'd warriour from infernal guile:
Where'er he fought, the demon saw despair
In every heart, that else, with ardour rose
To meet the battle: hence, he wish'd to rouse
Some of the mightiest, with strong arm, to hold
The war suspended, while he sought the camp
With hell-born purpose, ever bent on ill.

WHILE pondering thus, Androgeus took his eye,
Great in each act; though by Locrinus awed,
Or Brutus, known so late. High, in the van
Of Albion's mighty host, he led the war:
Yet inly murmuring, with his mates displeased,
And yet unknown the purpose of the foe;
Practised defence alone, and still indulged
The hope, though yet remote, of peaceful end.

IT chanced, that Dymas by the leader's side
Now fought; Abractes' younger hope. He sprung
Now to the front, and flung with ready hand

The dart, then shrunk, secure behind the shield
Of his great patron. While he stood in sight,
Locrinus mark'd incensed, the youthful Prince;
Yet deem'd to chasten with a sparing hand
His blind temerity, but leave untouch'd
His life. Hence, while the heedless youth raised high
The pointed javelin, from an arm divine
The dart flew quick: but erring in its course
Pierced, as the warriour turn'd toward the point,
His back, and nail'd him quivering to the soil,
Even at Androgeus' feet. Locrinus eyed
The slain, while pity touch'd his heart; yet soon
Regain'd the weapon; and triumphant, roll'd
The tide of battle with resistless sway.

As in Norwegian forests, when the bear,
That unprovoked forbears on man to sate
Her raging appetite, sees, on her haunt
The hunter breaking heedless; and her young
Pierced by his dart; impell'd to fell revenge
Alone, she marks the spoiler for her prey:
Thus fared Androgeus. O'er the field, he raised
A deafening shout, and with all Albion, rush'd
To whelm Locrinus and the Dardan bands.

Glad, as he saw the hosts in battle join'd,
In desperate battle, Azrael now assumed
Alcestes' form, and silent sought the tent,
Where, of Locrinus loved, Almeria stay'd.

FAR in its deep recess, while yet the war
Roll'd as a storm remote; the fair pursued
A secret task, by love alone devised;
Though yet the haughty nymph forbore, in words,
Or looks, to own its force. Her happy hand,
Long ere great Brutus reach'd the fated shore,
Had o'er the canvass sketch'd a work divine,
Glowing with living hues, and shades, like those,
On heaven's high arch, that melt in purer air.
AMID a tent, whose curtains, loosely spread,
Fell back, in council sat the Trojan peers,
Around their Chief. Locrinus in the midst,
Erect, and flaming in refulgent mail,
Caught every eye. A captive warriour near,
Among the mightiest, held the hero's hand;
Yet bent his knee before him. By his mien,
He seem'd to dignify distress: yet awed,
Confess'd his victor, whose expressive eye,
Where temper'd majesty, and mercy beam'd,
Spoke inborn greatness, unallied to pride,
Or boastful arrogance. Beside him, stood
A nymph like Venus, or th' imperial Queen
Of heaven; for sweetness, and majestic grace
Mixt in her form, as in poetic song,
They stand display'd to sight; and on his head,
Placed, as Almeria late, the wreath of fame.
While yet beneath her hand the figures breathed,

As if with life just glowing; and the hues
Rival'd the tints of nature;—on her work
Abrupt the demon broke. A well-known shape
He bore, Alcestes, thine; th' expected friend,
Destined to guide her course, and thus began:

'FORGIVE, bright maid, the man who holds thy life
'Dear as his own; whose zealous care obtrudes,
'Though but obsequious to his lord's command,
'On thy soft hours his message. While the Chief
'Before him drives the strangers last arrived;
'An Amazonian band, beneath the rule
'Of fierce Leontia, from Gerontes sprung;
'The Lydian troops dispersed, ere now assail
'The camp, but on the farther side; and thirst
'Alike for blood, and spoil. I saw the train,
'Gigantic shapes, approaching; and I come
'Hence to convey the loveliest of the fair,
'To a secure retreat. Nor to thyself
'Alone, my care extends. I have in charge,
'To guard the tent, and thine attendant train,
'From rude assault. Meantime, from these select
'One sole companion, and to me confide
'Your course, and safety from impending ill.'

THUS he: and thus, with soul-enchanting voice,
The maid.—'In haste thou seem'st. Are here thy friends
'Dispersed? or wait they yet remote?—In sight?
'Or in the woodland's shade?'—To her the fiend:

'HERE, wing'd by fervent zeal, I stand alone,
'Yet not remote, my brave companions reach
'Ere this the woodland's verge. But go resolved,
'Nor dread, thou fairest of thy sex, the foe.
'To me, untrodden paths, that intervolved,
'Elude the closest search, are all reveal'd.
'Hearst thou yon shout?—Even now perhaps, appears
'The dire Leontia! Haste we from the scene.'

HE said.—The fair, with unsuspicious thought
Obey'd: and rising, in its place disposed
Th' unfinish'd work; then sighing, as her mind
Presaged some melancholy scene:—'I go,'
She cried; 'thou guardian of the weak, who bend'st
'Thine ear propitious to the suppliant's voice,
'Protect mine innocence!' The demon shrunk
Aside while thus she spoke, nor dared reply.

IN haste departing; his deluded charge
Sought not a mate; for while the subtle fiend
Spoke of some tried companion, he devised
Means to prevent the choice. Assuming hence,
The mask of friendship, and assiduous care,
He magnified the peril, urged to fly
With instant speed; and by infernal guile
At last prevailing, from the camp seduced
The maid with him to seek the peaceful scene.

AS when the nymph of Scyros, who beheld
The first of Greeks array'd in female robes,

Stood by his form deceived, and to his tale
Gave unsuspecting heed: Almeria, thus
Deeming her guide Alcestes, heard his talk
Well pleased, and to the bower of peace pursued
The fiend's irregular course. Through many a path
Perplex'd and intricate, the virgin stray'd;
Along the vale, the woodland, and the hill
Alternate wandering. While they walk'd, the guide
Held, to his tale, that like the muse's song,
Gave deep delight, her feebler sense enthrall'd:
At last, while talking thus, they reach'd the wild,
Chearless and desolate, by human foot
Unmark'd, and bounded by surrounding skies.

Now, to the west, the glorious orb of day
Declined; and shades announced th' approaching eve.
Wan grew the virgin's cheek; her tottering knees
Sunk with their weight: as one from sleep awaked,
Whose eye with wonder scans unusual scenes,
She view'd the wilderness; but mark'd no friends
In sight; nor heard the chearful voice of man.

Train'd but in simple arts, nor known to guile,
Now first suspicion with her cloud, o'ercast
The mind's pure sunshine. On her guide she look'd
Timid, yet cautious to offend; and thus
With tremulous accent said:—'Nor friend appears,
'Nor refuge here. The mazes of the wild
'Mislead our erring steps.—Say, know'st thou aught

'Of hamlet near? for sounds that strike dismay
'To this thrill'd heart, come lingering on the wind.
To her, the fiend, whose hell-born thought conceived
Dire plans of death; though powers superiour quell'd
His vengeful wish; dark-lowering, as in scorn,
Replied.—'That here I leave thee, nor o'ercome
'Thy strength with force; and to some hungry wolf
'Consign thy weak and violated form,
'Thou owest me thanks. Thus far by me convey'd,
'Now find thy path alone.'—Frowning he spoke.
And spread his dragon pennons, like the sail
Of some vast ship, that solitary, ploughs
Th' Atlantic waste, from Patagonian hills
Descried; and to a peaceful region, bears
Dark magazines of nitrous fire. The winds
Then bore him howling through the turbid air.
To heaven the virgin raised her trembling eyes,
At first in still amazement.—All around,
What time she stood to temperate thought restored,
She turn'd her sight. But, on the wild, o'erspread
With birch, with woodbine, and the towering oak,
Whose broad and venerable branches arch'd
A spacious tract beneath; no path appear'd
To bower, or hamlet, or sequester'd grove.
Alone, the solitary bird of eve
Wail'd from the bough melodious, as inspired
With kindred thought, and touch'd with mortal woe.

Dark, while Almeria glean'd a scanty meal
On nature's common, grew th' etherial vault;
Loud rose the wind; the deeper shades of night
Prevail'd, and from their dank, and hollow dens,
Far in the mid-land waste, the beasts of prey
Now howling, rush'd abroad. Ah what was then
Thy state, fair wanderer! Staggering, breathless, pale,
Groping from tree to tree, amid the gloom
Closed round; and dreading at each step the fangs
Of ravening wolves, to gore her mangled frame;
In speechless agony, she sunk supine
Beneath a plane.—No kind protecting hand
Was near, to lift her from the dust; no heart
To melt with pity; no consoling voice
To whisper hope!—Cold clammy sweat bedew'd
Her toil-worn limbs: her dizzy eye-balls closed,
She swoon'd in death-like rest. Thus fares the wretch,
Who, on the upland labouring, when the North
Scatters his straggling locks of silver hair,
What time his old bald head, in drifting heaps
Of snow deep buried, dreams of care no more.

But He, the spirit celestial, from her birth
Ordain'd to guide this wanderer through the maze
Of life; whose hand had held, in many a change,
Th' impending peril from its aim, beheld
His charge with heedful eye. Soft on his wings,
That hover'd o'er the space, he caught the dews

Of night; the noxious vapours as they rose,
Dank mists, and chilling blasts, the power dispell'd:
And round the virgin breathed ethereal air;
Pure stream, that to the secret springs of life
Gives just and temperate harmony. Thus safe,
He held her sense in long oblivion drown'd.

Now, beaming on the blushing orient, rose
Aurora smiling. Nature felt the ray
Diffusing warmth around. The guide forbore
A while, to rouse his unsuspecting ward
From slumber, till he laid th' angelic form
Aside. A youth with hyacinthine locks
He seem'd, that floating o'er his shoulders, flow'd
In careless ringlets. As at ease reclined,
Beside a brook that murmur'd o'er the dale,
From the soft lute he call'd enchanting airs,
That breathed of heaven, abroad. Along the stream,
Along the mazes of the weedy wild,
Swell'd the slow notes, and to the fair convey'd
Delight ineffable. A while she lay
Entranced; the sound o'erpowering every sense,
In luxury of bliss; nor had awaked,
But that the rapt musician stay'd his hand,
As one o'erlabour'd, ev'n from pleasing toil
Who rests. At once, the solitary scene
Broke on her sight. She sigh'd, and look'd around
To find the minstrel, but in vain; and deem'd

The dream presageful of approaching woe.
To Jove, the wanderer's friend, Almeria raised
Her eyes, her voice; and felt reviving hope;
The sign of prayer accepted, while she spoke
Chearing her heart, that cast th' oppressive weight
Of sadness, bounding lightly, to the winds.
She knew the present Deity, and moved
Now from the shade, unterrified; secure,
Beneath the guidance of th' Eternal's hand,
Though lost to human search. Heaven's awful Sire,
While with benignant eye he views the just,
Thus bids the helpless, and the weak, be bold.
Not far the virgin stray'd, when lo! the youth
Met her glad sight; in form unmatch'd, yet calm
And mild of aspect! On his face she gazed,
Not without wonder, and beheld the lute,
So late with transport heard, that graced his side;
And o'er his limbs, the vestment falling low,
All breathing peace. Nor less the seeming swain
Now rising, eyed with fix'd and pure regard
His charge. Intent to still her throbbing heart,
He smiled, and thus in graceful accent said:
'Whence is it, fairest of thy kind, that here
'Thou roam'st the desart? If by chance disjoin'd,
'From friends, thou seek'st again, some winding path
'Lost in thy walk; 'tis dangerous to explore
'The tract behind; such numerous hosts o'erspread

'Afar the region. But, in me behold
'A friend, a guide, if thou approvest; prepared
'To lead thy step from peril, to the cell
'Where foes approach not, nor the sons of war.
'I know, where lives a venerable sage,
'Not far; whose hospitable door admits
'The stranger guest; and whose unsparing hand
'Delights in liberal acts. Heaven to his thought
'Reveals the future, as the just reward
'Conferr'd on virtuous deeds. Tell, if thine heart
'Would prompt thee there to sojourn, till these scenes
'Be past!—Whate'er thy purpose, or desire,
'Tell thy free thought, and judge my words sincere.'

THUS talking; from the virgin, else depress'd,
He chased desponding dread; and in its place
Gave ease, and pleasing hope, unknown before.
Hence, eyeing with a grace that wins the heart
To yield assent, the youth; she thus replied:

'FRIEND, (for thy face, that speaks a feeling breast,
'Prompts that auspicious name) thou seest a maid
'Before thee, helpless, lured by hell-born fraud
'From all she loved; and left forlorn, and wild,
'To roam this waste. O! lead me to the haunt
'Of man!—Thou canst not:—no—thou canst not hold
'Guile in thy thought, nor purpose to betray
'The weak, and, of thy needful aid deprived,
'The desolate of heart. O'er one unskill'd

'In fraud; a maid, a stranger, to exult,
'At once confiding, and with ease betray'd,
'How poor, alas! the triumph!—But proceed.
'I go submissive where thou point'st my way.'

THUS while she spoke, th' angelic guardian view'd
His charge, serenely smiling; and return'd:
'Confide, illustrious fair; and let the task
'Be mine, to guide thee to a safe retreat,
'Where peril comes not.—Be thy future days
'Unblamed, nor stain'd with clouds of dark dismay.'

HE said; and turning quick with grace divine,
Plunged in the woodland's depth. The virgin, pleased
And lightly swimming as on wings of air,
Pursued his step.—And lo! a path unseen
Till now, fair-opening, show'd some friendly shade,
Some habitation near! Anon, a hill
They climb'd, ascending smoothly on the turf,
Chequer'd with flowers; while ranged on either side,
Birch, and sweet woodbine, spread ethereal balm
Around, while high the spiring poplar tower'd,
Or elm aerial, sheltering with their boughs
The humbler tenants of the wild. They gain'd
The topmost height; and now, in prospect saw
A wilderness behind, that seem'd to meet
The bending clouds; but on the ground before,
A spacious circuit lay beneath, inclosed
Around, yet not to break th' assault of war.

CLEAR'D of encumbering wood, the level lawn
Appear'd. Yet in the midst, an antient oak
Stood, as some mountain on a deep-fixt base,
And spreading to the winds its branching arms,
Involved the circle in its shade. The nymph
Felt reverential dread, yet with her guide
Approach'd. And now they reach'd th' investing wall,
Anon the gate, that to the hallowed space
Gave entrance. Here they stood exposed to sight
Not long. For lo! the Druid, in his robe
Of purest white, came onwards! O'er his breast,
The silver beard descending, gave his form
Imperial grace. A fillet bound his locks,
His snowy locks that glitter'd in the sun.
Near him the Genius of the sacred ground
Appear'd to hover; for his mantle swell'd
Heaved by no breeze; and through the living air
Some spirit breathing on the void, o'erspread
The still and solemn scene. Even he who led
Almeria's step, though pure as heaven's own beam,
With reverence view'd him. On the sire he bent
The mild eye streaming light, and thus began:

'FROM thee, the son of virtue, though untaught
'In rites of due and proper form, to hail
'Th' Eternal Father; yet celestial minds
'Shade not their radiance: in one cause employ'd,
'We call the just our brethren, and survey

'Well-pleased their deeds, and heaven-directed end.
'Thou seest a virgin, whom by heaven's command
'I guard; and sheltering from infernal wiles,
'Have hither brought. As of the best, I leave
'Her to thy guidance. I, of race divine,
'Nor holding conference with the sons of earth,
'Though veil'd from human ken, am ever near,
'To shield this sacred charge from every ill.'

THIS said, the pure, and elemental ray
Pierced the thin frame, that floating loose, dissolved
In air. The priest beheld with steady gaze,
As not unknown, th' ethereal guest; and led
Almeria rapt in wonder, to his cell,
Bless'd dome! the haunt of peace, and deep repose.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK XII.—

THE ARGUMENT.

While these transactions are going on, LOCRINUS is assailed on all sides by three ALBIAN Leaders, of whom he kills one; and their troops being dispersed, passes on to another quarter. ANDROGEUS, with a few Chiefs, instigated by despair, attack the DARDANS in his absence. The Demon AZRAEL, when they are ready to be overwhelmed, brings back a formidable party to their assistance; and is permitted to support them against their enemies. In the mean time LEONTIA, having routed the LYDIANS, is observed in her approach to the camp by CAMBER, and EVANDER; of whom the former is encouraged by his associate to repel her attack. He goes forth with his young friend PHILANTES, who is slain by LEONTIA, whom CAMBER engages, and kills in single combat. With the fate of ARINTHEUS, the Tutor of PHILANTES, and with an account of the rage of GERONTES for the loss of his Daughter, the book concludes.

AMID the tumult of the bloody field,
While yet Locrinus plunged, nor knew what fate
Oppress'd his loved Almeria; Albion's host
Opposed a barrier to his might.—With shields

On shields high-piled, and close portended spears,
They darken'd all the field; and seem'd a mound
Not by the hand of man to be o'erturn'd,
Or broken. In their front Androgeus tower'd,
O'ershading, with a moon-like orb, the bands
Ranged deep behind him. Segonax appear'd
Near him in shining arms; by native pride,
But more by virtuous indignation fired.
The Trojan host he deem'd a lawless throng,
Barbarous, and dissolute; that unprovoked,
Fought, but to crush beneath the rod of power
A harmless race. Alone Locrinus struck
Dread to his heart; in port, in acts, divine!
As through the long, long midnight, that invests
The polar regions; flames the mounting sun
First seen, refulgent o'er th' aerial hill
As peering from the height: anon, display'd
More full to sight; and in his course, beheld
At last in bright effulgence o'er the vales;
While winter shivering, from his keen eye shrinks
Ev'n to the limit of her waste domain;
Her icy vestment frittering, and her heaps
Of snow dissolving in the genial ray:
Such waste Locrinus spread, and as he waved
His spear, all Albion thus retired. He eyed
The guard of lances, and compacted shields,
With high disdain; and shaking in his hand

A javelin wing'd for flight, at random threw
The barbed weapon, not in vain. It pierced
Thy side, Valderus, while in hope secure,
Beneath a brazen barrier. From the point
That reach'd the seat of life, the warriour shrunk
Panting, and sobb'd his spirit into air.
Frowning the hero rose.—A pause ensued,
A solemn pause! For on his lifted spear
Death seem'd attendant, and the nearest fled,
As from the minister of fate, prepared
To strike!—Alone, Androgeus unappall'd
Shot to the gap, and in his trembling bands
Breathed courage. All by praises, threats, command,
He moved; and singly stay'd the foe's career,
With him unwilling to contend in arms.

MEANTIME, high-minded Segonax beheld
Locrinus' rout, and in his thought revolved
A mighty deed. He knew that powerful arm
By dire experience; yet resentment push'd
His spirit onwards. While he saw the Chief,
Scarce by Androgeus, mindful of defence
Alone, and Albion, in his race with-held;
Musing he stood a moment unresolved,
And thus indignant, to himself began:

'WHENCE is it that such partial grace bestow'd
'Still crowns yon favour'd leader? In his walk
'I trace the guidance of th' Eternal's hand.

'Our priests revere him, as the Lord supreme
'Who punishes injustice; yet His power
'Upholds this mighty spoiler, who leads forth
'A barbarous people to control the free,
'Confounding every right. I know 'tis vain
'To match with his, this single arm in fight.
'I tremble for Androgeus. Him o'erthrown,
'Or even discomfited, our all is lost.
'What if I call Leontes to mine aid,
'And with joint force assail this god-like foe?
'On him who wrought his brother's fall, the youth
'Still looks indignant, and Abractes pines
'Yet on the verge of ebbing life; to see
'His darling son avenged. Just heaven may speed
'Some winged javelin to the mark desired.'
While thus he ponder'd, old Abractes stood
Not far; contending sorrow, and fierce ire
Prey'd on his heart alternate. Now he wish'd
To give Leontes' headlong rage its way;
A youthful heat, that drove the warriour on
To meet Locrinus. Terror now restrain'd
His purpose. On the hero's hand he saw
Sure fate suspended imminent. He paused
Thus unresolved, when Segonax approach'd,
Revealing his intent. Abractes' eyes
Then first with pleasure sparkled. 'Not of man,'
He cried, 'this counsel comes, but heaven-inspired.

'Myself will join you, Chiefs. This aged frame,
'By time unbraced, can yet support a shield,
'Perhaps to ward another's fate: and He,
'Whose purpose stands unshaken by the lapse
'Of years, if right I read his will, even now
'Ordains some great event, though yet unknown.'
AH! blind, ill-fated! to th' event so near!
Of Heaven's decree thou know'st not, nor what Chief
Must bleed. Half-judging man, who scans the past,
Is of the future uninformed; though God
Oft gives presageful warnings in his hours
Of musing; from the glance of piercing thought,
Though rarely, yet withdrawing the dim veil,
That deep behind it shades the time to come.
As when two eagles, from th' imperial seat
Expell'd, and left o'er heaven's aerial void
To hold their journey uncontrolled; behold
A tempting prize in ken, the youthful stag,
Escaped his dam, and frisking in the vale
Alone: around him wheeling unresolved
They mark his chest, and budding horns, with fear;
Nor in their beaks, or talons yet unbraced,
Confide; if chance they see the parent sire,
High on the pure and elemental air;
What courage swells their beating hearts! what hope
Of conquest, with a mate so versed in toils,
Then fired the daring warriours! From the line

They broke, and dreadful, in Locrinus' front
Advancing, strode in gloomy state; their gait,
Their aspect, lower'd defiance. Check'd, at once,
The Trojan turning stay'd his lance; the fire
Flash'd from his rolling eye-balls; yet unawed,
Stern Segonax approach'd, and thus began:
'But that thou art a robber bent on spoil,
'And by no law controlled, by Heaven sent forth,
'A minister of vengeance, not of grace;
'And vested, in th' Eternal's wrath, with power;
'I could admire thy bearing, and thine acts,
'Great as thou seem'st in all. Yet foes combined
'O'ermatch the mightiest. In these Chiefs, behold
'Such foes; and in myself, their friend, prepared
'To fall, or conquer. Call thy bands away
'While yet thou may'st, glad, that the bravest join'd
'Their force to meet thy prowess; and an host
'Shook at thy single arm.'—Thus he: nor aught
Locrinus deign'd of answer; but in ire
High rising, as a tempest from the North,
That lifts the wild wave on its wing, dismiss'd
The fateful spear. Along thy sidelong shield,
Great Segonax, it glanced; and held its course,
Till deeply buried in Abractes' frame,
Through the rent throat it sunk. The locks of age
Lay soil'd in dust; and from the lips, in death
Now feebly quivering, well'd a purple rill,

And bathed thy feet, Leontes; while the sire
Breathed his last sigh, and slept, to wake no more.
ALL, even Locrinus, while they saw the spear
Thus from the mark diverging, cursed the point
That wrought so foul a deed: sighing, he drew
The reeking weapon backwards. 'Not to strike
'The heart of falling age, I gave thee wing!'
He thus exclaim'd; then rushing, as enraged,
With anger maddening, as inspired by shame,
He wreak'd on Segonax his wrath. The Chief,
While yet he bore aloft the mighty shield,
Felt in his side the slanting dart impress
A wound, and felt before a hand unmatch'd
In might, that backwards hurl'd him on the plain—
As smoke in columns rising, when assail'd
By the rude North: nor now Locrinus stay'd
To strike him prostrate; but disdainful turn'd
To meet Leontes, by the bleeding corse
Who stood in speechless anguish, and with eyes
That flash'd pale lightning, scann'd the mighty foe
Prepared for combat; but the youth disarm'd
His rage, and pity in his heart had quell'd
Each fiercer passion; when a javelin sent
With rash, but eager fury, as it pass'd,
Rased, through the parting mail, the warriour's arm,
And roused his sleeping ire.—He bade his bands
Advance; and shouting dreadful, spread dismay

O'er Albion. As the hand of Jove outstretch'd
Along the empyrean, wielding bolts
That rive the branching and deep rooted oak,
Scattering its leafy honours o'er the vale
They wont to shade :—so dreadful seem'd thy form,
Locrinus, and before thee sunk the strength
Of trembling nations, as they gazed, appall'd!
As yet the hero stay'd but to atchieve
One deed, and drive in heaps the flying foes
Back to their camp. Leontes madly dared
His force to combat, by despair impell'd,
And thirst of dear revenge.—In act to strike
Locrinus stood, with hand uplifted high
In air; when to his forward spear opposed,
Was seen thy shield, Androgeus! Through its folds
The forceful weapon pass'd, and in the soil
Sunk quivering. Soon the daring Trojan freed
His lance: and lo! the mighty stood to meet
The great in arms! Intrepid valour here,
Disdain of rival prowess, and the hope
By one decisive act to give the war
An end; there, courage by indignant ire
Roused to its greatest effort, and an arm
Endow'd with giant might, an heart confirm'd
By resolution, and disposed to brave
All ills; inspired the warlike Chiefs. They met;
And one had fallen; but of the foes remain'd

A few brave leaders, all intent to save
Thy valued life, Androgeus!—Mona's king
Orontes, great Caractacus, renown'd
For glorious deeds, with Segonax, restored
To fight, and young Leontes, by the hope
Of vengeance soothed to breathe the vital air;
All interposing, held the rival foes
From combat. Great Orontes came the first,
Girt with the scanty relique of an host,
So formidable once; and thus apart
Bespoke Androgeus: 'Here we waste our strength
'In fruitless toils. Our bands are fled. On thee
'Hangs our last hope. A noble few remain.
'Brave we with these no single Prince; but break
'Through yon black cohort of investing powers,
'Even to the camp. Or victory awaits
'To crown us there; or honourable death
'To end our labours; and immortal fame.'
He spoke.—Androgeus cast his eyes around,
And mark'd a scene of universal rout,
Dire and remediless. Locrinus deign'd
No farther combat; but disdainful, thus
To Polybus. 'Thou with the Dardan race,
'Pursue yon routed host along the vale,
'Even to the woodland; (thus he said) remain
'There fix'd: while I assail the giant Chief,
'Along the right with his fierce crew disposed,

'Announcing direful uproar.'—As he spoke,
He wheel'd, and flew impetuous o'er the field,
To meet Romerus' arm. A dusty cloud
Soon in its bosom wrapt him deep from view.

Joy, when Locrinus met their sight no more,
Inspired each Albian's breast, who yet remain'd
Around the great commander. He, resolved
To fall or conquer, deem'd some desperate deed
Alone proportion'd to the time, and hence
Conceived a god-like purpose. 'Cast,' he cried,
'Aside, ye remnant of a race renown'd
'But late, and glorious; cast aside dismay,
'And follow where I lead. On yon black bands,
'Who deem the conflict ended, let us pour,
'And leave th' event to Heaven!'

As when the far-famed Spartan, with a few
Selected heroes, resolute to brave,
In Freedom's glorious cause, the Persian powers;
What time he eyed th' innumerable files,
With varied ensigns trembling in the sun,
O'erspreading all the land; adventurous, broke
On their broad host; and dreadful, hew'd a path
To thy pavilion, Xerxes! Thus the Chief
Of Albion, with the train assembled round,
Rush'd on the Dardan foes that stood in arms
Opposed; terrific as a God! A shower
Of javelins darken'd, in his course, the air,

Like hail descending on his plumed helm,
Or shield effulgent. But his height, his spear,
His arm that bore destruction, and the rage
That gave it sevenfold strength, to every heart
Struck consternation and affright. His friends,
At once by fury and revenge impell'd,
Spread ruin in their course. To match their force,
Phrenor and Polybus in vain essay'd.
That, as he raised aloft the fatal lance,
Thy hand, great Segonax, o'erthrew. His mate,
The fierce Orontes, like a mountain pard,
With hunger stung, and rushing down the hills
Prone to his prey, assail'd. Short was the fight,
Though dire. The Dardan on his shield received
Redoubled blows; and watchful of his foe,
While slow-retreating, held alive the war.

MEANWHILE fell Azrael, as he view'd the war
With heedful eye; with ire and scorn beheld
The scatter'd Albians flying, and their Chiefs
Amid an host enclosed.—Sudden, he took
Thy form, Atrebates! a warriour, known
In combat, and with strength of lungs endow'd
To bid the hills re-echo. With full force
He call'd, he roar'd aloud.—'What terrour wings
'Your flight, ye trembling herd, when your great foe
'Pursues not?—By the stranger race enclosed,
'Your leader fights, and looks in vain for aid.

'Turn, ere he sink in death.'—At once they heard,
And backward cast their eyes. No troops appear'd
In sight amid the forest:—but afar
They heard the shout of charging hosts; nor saw
Their mightiest. Soon, a formidable band
Convened. The demon breathed in every heart
A vengeful fury like his own. 'Be strong,'
He cried, 'and follow where I lead the way.'
Now, rush'd impetuous from the woodland's depth
The fiery sons of Albion; and beheld
Their bravest warriours, by the Dardan throng,
As by a mound, invested; nor the man
So dreaded, stood in view. Shouting, they broke
Amid th' assailants. Gladness, as he heard,
First touch'd Androgeus' heart.—'Some power divine
'Recalls the flying Albians, late dispersed,'
He cried, 'and sends them to rekindle hope,
'Else quench'd.' He said, and ceasing from his course
A moment, held th' assailing host at bay,
Deeming relief at hand. Nor long he stood
In expectation. By the fiend of hell
Convey'd, the vengeful Albians hew'd a path
Even through the closest ranks, to their great Prince;
O'erbearing opposition. Azrael wrapt
In mist the flying throng, and drove aside
The Trojan weapons.—Hence the eader met
His long-lost friends, and saw the fight restored.

But, mighty numbers to the camp forbade
Approach. Arpasias, with Larissa's sons,
By warlike Alban to his care consign'd,
Himself employ'd in other work; thy race,
Lyrnessus, famed for heroes, with their Prince,
Adrastus, practised in each dexterous art,
Each stratagem of war; and ranged beneath
Pisander, Athens' glorious troops o'erpower'd
The thinner number, and compell'd to leave
The perilous attempt. Again, they closed
Around the natives of the land, unskill'd
In arms, though brave; while turn'd on every side,
All toil'd, and labouring, with unequall'd might
By indignation roused, maintain'd the day.

But, though provoked, the guardian of the land
Will'd not the fall of Albion. Hence she gave
Th' infernal spirits licence to defend
The race they hated, yet upheld, as friends,
Leagued with allies to guard a noble cause
Of common interest. Smiling, while she saw
The demons labouring to support their foes,
She gave them scope; and but from final rout,
Screen'd, in each rough repulse, the Trojan powers.

Meanwhile, Leontia with her madding crew,
Led, as she deem'd, by prosperous fates, approach'd
The bulwarks of the camp. Not unobserved
Of Brutus was her course; and not unheard

Her cries announcing triumph. He beheld
Th' affrighted Lydians flying, and had sent
An instant aid; but Heaven, that doom'd their fall,
Forbade relief. Arimon thrice prepared,
With Sparta's ready warriours, to repel
Th' assault; and thrice blue lightning plough'd the soil
Around his steps. Above, was heard the roar
Of thunder. Trembling at th' imagined voice
Of Jove, the Spartan stood controlled. Nor more
The monarch urged him on. He knew, what force,
Beneath bold Camber, as a wall begirt
The camp. Gerontes, with Romerus leagued,
Call'd for his utmost might, and struck dismay
Even to the firmest heart. Hence these employ'd
His, and his people's hands; the Lydian host
Resign'd to fate, and Jove's supreme decree.

As when a troop of famish'd wolves, descend
Thy mountains, Russia, headlong o'er the bank
Of Tanais, or amid Siberian vales,
Awake the sleeping peasant, with the yell
Of death. Around his solitary hut
He sees the throng assembled with fell eyes,
And blood-stain'd jaws:—not less with clamour, rush'd
The female furies onwards; nor with rage
Less fierce, assail'd whate'er opposed their power.

But, from the height where sat the Lesbian sage,
With Camber leagued, and wide around, o'erlook'd

Each host: the younger warriour first beheld
The routed Lydians.—'Gods! what desperate crew
'From yonder point advances!' thus he said
In haste. 'Before them, if I rightly judge,
'Evœmon, with his dastard legion, flies!
'A female tribe they seem!—Leontia guides
'Their course;—and hither all approach!' He said.
Nor long Evander, when he mark'd the throng,
Stood unresolved. 'Go, Prince, for now 'tis meet
'To give thine ardour scope: call to thine aid
'A chosen cohort;' (thus Evander said)
'With these protect the feeble, and repel
'Yon monster herd. Should their fell leader brave
'Thy force, then freely give thy dart its way;
'Nor spare her life. Yet near the camp, maintain
'Thy station fix'd. Some other bands may break
'Its barriers, and assault a helpless train,
'Their great defenders gone.'—While yet he spoke,
Th' intrepid warriour rising, chose a troop,
In courage, not in numbers, who excell'd
Their mates. On his own force the Prince relied,
And the tried valour of a noble few.

PHILANTES, he, of fallen Clitander's host,
Among the first in action, as in power,
His friend now lost; with Camber, wish'd to learn
The *trade*, and share the glorious toils of war.
Hence, though the youth, yet in the smiling spring

Of life, attain'd not Camber's riper age;
Beneath his rule, he led his native troops
To foreign regions. Old Arintheus, charged
To guide the blooming warriour, oft forewarn'd
The youth of rashness, and forbade, in all
To imitate a leader, though renown'd
For warlike deeds; yet bold ev'n in th' extreme,
And bent on perilous attempts. He gave
With tears the counsel; but o'er-ruling fate
Forbade observance; and th' advice was vain.

Now, through th' unfolding portals, Camber rush'd
Exulting to the field. His foes awaked
At once disdain, and anger. Lydia's sons,
A scanty remnant, driven in headlong flight,
Announced their triumph and approach. The Prince
Screen'd the thin relics of a numerous host
Within his shields; then pausing, while he mark'd
Now near, Leontia with her dire compeers;
Turn'd to his youthful mate, and thus address'd:

'YOUNG as thou art in arms, with me advance,
'And choose, amid yon desperate throng, thy foe.
'There, if I deem aright, Leontia rules
'A madding herd. A fury leads the fight
'Close at her side.—The leader, or her mate,
'Assail, as best beseems.' Philantes caught
His words with joy. 'Yon ruler of the tribe,
'First let this hand attempt.' Speaking, he rush'd

To fight; nor to the Lord of heaven address'd
His vows, unhappy! but with hasty foot
Light-flying, check'd the female's fierce career.
Now near, with arms and looks that spread affright,
The shouting Amazon advanced; in form,
And gesture horrid as her ruthless sire.
As stands a pine, beside an aged elm,
With boughs wide spreading, and aerial spire;
In strength inferiour, yet the weaker, mates
In height the broader trunk; Leontia thus,
Seen by Gerontes or Romerus, seem'd
In stature justly pair'd; nor much in power,
Or force unequal.—In vindictive thought
Surpassing far her kindred, as in fleet,
And pliant limbs. She burst along the field,
And now terrific, wielded in her hand
A mace in iron cased. Thus dreadful came
Leontia. On the youth, she turn'd an eye
Of death. Her face, her stature, and her shape,
Now seen at hand, appall'd him. O'er her frame,
Close furs descending, from assault secured
The form they shaded; and her speed forbade
The warriour's aim in combat.—With his spear
High-raised, as one entranced, Philantes stood;
Nor sought the ready battle, nor declined;
When thundering, on his helm she dash'd the mace,
And hurl'd him reeling, backwards. Camber saw

Th' impending fate: nor fleeter flies the steed,
When darting light and rapid to the goal,
Than he to save the youth:—but on his course
Argantia broke, and held his arm employ'd
To bear her fierce assault; while in her rear,
Came thundering on, an Amazonian band.

MEANWHILE, Philantes gathering all his force,
Sprung on his opposite; but met repulse
In each attack, with pride and scorn repell'd.
As when a playful boy, beside a brook,
Sports with some glittering insect, or resists
Some village dog, though keen, that in his path
Prances with weak annoyance; thus the foe
In every act the blooming warriour foil'd,
Baffling successive efforts; while with taunts,
When scanning o'er his aspect, and in thought
Rich with his spoils; she fired him, and by turns
Assail'd, evaded, wheel'd, repulsed, decoy'd,
And mock'd his wasted prowess. Roused at last
To rage, she lock'd him in one strenuous grasp,
And swung him high in air. Fierce Camber saw
The meditated death, and eager, sprung
In vain to save him. Still Argantia came
With her fell mates, terrific in his front;
And close investing, held him fix'd. He saw
(Heart-piercing view!) the youthful hero dash'd
Prone on the blood-stain'd soil, to rise no more.

This pass'd, while in the circling ramparts, stood
With hoary locks Arintheus, and beheld
With dim eyes strain'd to mark Philantes' rout,
His desperate combat. To the veins of age,
Dread gave the pulse of youth. He scaled the mound,
Unaided, trembling; sent his feeble voice
In cries before him; press'd with hasty foot
The plain; a moment press'd; th' impulsive fire
Fled, as he saw the youth's disshevell'd locks
Loose-spreading on the earth. He crept to reach
His breathless corse: and while th' astonish'd foe
Stay'd speechless near him; roll'd his snowy hairs
In blood yet warm; then raised his wither'd hand,
In act to imprecate! But ere he breathed
One accent, groan'd, and died! A low faint wail
The parting spirit pour'd, and pass'd in air!

As when the ships, that near Fuego's shores
Stretch to the southern ocean, when they pass
Thy straits, Magellan; with extended sails
Catch the light wind; if, while the joyous hearts
Now deem all peril past, the raging south
Gives all her yelling sons at once to roar;
The headmost vessel foundering in their sight,
Dread strikes the crew, that in unequal barks
Toil on the gathering surge:—Such terror seized
The Trojan bands. All from Leontia's hand
Shrunk back. Around she whirl'd the gory mace;

And call'd her mates. Her mates with joy obey'd.
They join, they thicken. Headlong to the camp
They rush. Argantia, from the Trojan Chief
Now flying, mix'd amid the herd. A path
Led to the rough mounds now in prospect near.

But Camber, leagued with Mnestheus, and the force
Of Epialtes, like a God in fight,
Heroes of Mitylenia, in each act
Of war long practised; urged by dire revenge,
Rush'd on the shouting Amazons, and check'd
Their leader's dire career. Before them, blazed
His shield. His dreadful voice announcing war,
And stern defiance, call'd her to the fight.
She turn'd; nor dreadless, saw the furious Prince
Rushing in all his might, to meet her rage.

Now, from the tents, that screen'd within the camp
A throng innumerous; to the ramparts, all
Burst forth at once. Thence, on the plain they gazed
Intent, with eager eyes: as stands a flock
Of birds, assembled on some antient tower,
Warn'd by th' autumnal blast, and clouds that shift
Along th' expanse of heaven; to bear their flight
Afar, to lands, that blooming, in our depth
Of freezing winter, feel a temperate sun:
All turning southward, ere they mount on air,
Eye the blue waste, and meditate their range
Along the boundless void: thus all beheld

Th' approaching combatants; nor voice was heard
Amid the mighty concourse, nor the breath
That fluttering, speaks the fervid soul on wing.
Sight gave each movement of the heart to view,
Intense, yet varying with the shifting scene.
MEANTIME, Leontia, doubtful as she saw
The Trojan's fierce demeanour, knew alarm
At first. She shunn'd the flying dart, but fear'd
The spear now waving in his front. She seized
A rock, and poising high, above the ranks,
The mighty fragment, hurl'd it at the foe.
Full on his shoulder, as he stood exposed,
The ruin broke: through all his frame he felt
The shock, recoiling backwards, while the scenes
Swimm'd on his dizzy eyes; the mass behind
Trench'd the deep earth, and sunk into the soil.
As when the son of Jove as yet unbroke
By toils, and victor in each various field,
From Dejanira, rankling with the rage
Of fiend-like jealousy, received the shirt
Drench'd deep in Centaur blood, that wrought him pain;
And roused to furious acts; such passion fired
Thy breast, bold Camber! With resistless force
He threw the spear impetuous, but o'ershot
The mark, as fury, not the just desire
Of reason, sway'd his thought. The female foe
Essay'd to close him in her grasp, as erst

She held Philantes; but he shunn'd the fight
So near; and seizing his long spear, renew'd
Once more the combat. In Leontia's hand,
The strong mace whirl'd around, with stroke on stroke
Redoubling quick, assail'd the Trojan Prince,
Stunn'd and recoiling. As the traveller beat
By hail thick-battering, or descending floods,
Seeks some close covert; thus bold Camber bore
Beneath his shield secure, the storm of blows,
Though chafed, and meditating dire revenge.

And now that hour approach'd; for with her toil
O'erspent, his adversary, though endow'd
With giant force, breathed short: her arm that lost
Its wonted prowess, slowly with its load
Now rose; and press'd more feebly as it fell.
This seen, new vigour braced the hero's hand,
His spirit kindled into rage. He sprung
Fierce on his opposite, and held her fixt
With one extended arm, with one he grasp'd
His sword drawn back, and plunged it in her heart
At once: the life-blood gushing through the wound,
O'erspread the field. She fell; and sobbing, cast
Life to the winds, supinely stretch'd along.

Not, when assembled Greece in still suspense
Stood on Thessalia's plain, and dubious, eyed
The mighty Roman; anxious all to know
Their fate:—not, when the herald by command

Announced in welcome words: 'Ye men of Greece,
'Ye glorious sons of liberty;—BE FREE!'
Not then, the doubling shouts of long acclaim
That from th' aerial azure, struck to earth
The plumed people in their flight; surpass'd
The voice of triumph from the throng within
The camp, that pealing far along the waste,
Spoke loud of conquest, and the mighty slain.

THUS stood the war; while fierce Gerontes toil'd
Rough in the van of fight, and fired his mates
With his own thirst of blood. Megistheus now,
And now great Brutus match'd him, and inflamed,
By many a foul repulse, his native rage.
As yet unconscious what the fates decreed,
He heard the sound of conquest, from a scene
Remote; and knew that not his giant tribes
Swell'd the long accents. While he ceased from fight
A moment, listening, Ramiel came in haste;
(Silures' borrow'd shape conceal'd the fiend:)
He came, to spread confusion, and dismay
O'er all; and inly, with rejoicing heart,
Brood o'er the misery himself had caused.

'AH! sire unhappy!' thus he cried: 'Thou seest
'A messenger of death! thy daughter lies
'Stretch'd cold on earth. A Chief who guards the camp,
'Camber his name, by one their mightiest Prince
'Alone, in arms excell'd, wrought the foul deed.

'Call to thine aid Romerus, and regain
'The breathless corse, else left to glut the foe.'
THIS heard; amazement, horrour, and despair
O'erpower'd the father's heart; (for nature speaks
In every breast.) He rent his hoary locks
In speechless anguish; on the ground he dash'd
His face; and trench'd with rooted hands the soil.
At last, blaspheming heaven, the giant rose,
And roaring in a voice that still'd the war
At once, convened his kindred, with the band
All howling round him; like a mountain pard
He rush'd with headlong fury o'er the plain.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK XIII.—

THE ARGUMENT.

CAMBER is worsted by GERONTES, in a single combat, which he had undertaken, contrary to the advice of EVANDER; and is saved from ruin by the wise precaution of that Leader.—GERONTES carries however the body of his Daughter, without opposition, from the field. While matters are in this state near the camp, the attack of ROMERUS, and his followers, is supported by BRUTUS with much difficulty. But the scale is turned by the arrival of LOCRINUS, to whom the Genius of the Island destines the victory. In this purpose she is disappointed, by receiving a command from GOD to desist during a season, and call off the other celestials from the field. Meanwhile, the son of ROMERUS is slain by a follower of LOCRINUS. The Father, in despair, reproaches the Being who had promised him assistance. AZRAEL hears, and having assumed the form of an Albian warriour, draws LOCRINUS after him into the woodland, by a well feigned tale, where he is overtaken by night.—BRUTUS, having concerted measures, both to assist LOCRINUS, and to gain information concerning the ALBIANS, rests with his army during the night, which is spent by both parties on the field.

BUT from his height, the Lesbian sage survey'd
The vale beneath; and in approach, beheld
The giant monarch. Starting at his voice,
Resounding o'er the distant vales; he fear'd

For Camber, coping with Gerontes' rage
Roused to its height. He knew the Trojan Chief
Brave in th' extreme; and by no threats o'eraw'd,
Or power of mortal arm. Hence, if provoked,
He dreaded in the Prince, precipitate,
And rash encounter; or some act unweigh'd,
That might involve in peril all the host,
Himself the first perhaps, and bring dismay.

THUS pondering, down the mount Evander strode,
And stay'd the warriour's course. Behind the bands
Now ranged to meet Gerontes, and his crew,
They held their way; when thus the Full of Days
Gave temperate counsel.—'Lo! the giant King
'Comes onward, madding with revenge! 'Twere rash
'To tempt his fury now. Retire, within
'Yon ramparts. Let him bear the breathless corse,
'Uninjured, from the field: 'tis all that now
'Remains of her, so like her sire in shape,
'In savage deeds so like. 'Tis yours alone,
'To guard the camp; but not, without its verge,
'To fight unceasing battles on the plain;
'When now, no flying troop, like those so late
'Dispersed, implores protection from their foes.'

HE ceased: but, to the warriour's rising heart,
Struck not conviction. With surprise, unmixt
With rude contempt or anger, he beheld
The Lesbian Chief, and ardent, thus replied:

'PRINCE, know, the counsel that thine age suggests,
'Thy youth had heard with scorn.—But see, he comes!
'Shall I, descended from a race divine,
'Forget my great progenitors; forget
'My sire, my former deeds; and shun to meet
'Yon fierce barbarian in his wrath; or yield
'To him a conqueror's right, as if impell'd
'By terror?—No.'—He added nought; but turn'd,
And bade his Trojan host maintain the fight
Alone. Evander held the Lesbian bands
From action; yet, before the ramparts, stood
With these in arms: presageful of th' event
He stay'd, prepared for each successive scene.
THUS while they held discourse, the giant King
With fell intent, rush'd furious o'er the field,
O'erbearing in his rage, whate'er opposed
His mace. A lawless herd behind him came,
With clubs, that brandish'd in their horrid hands,
Portended death, and stones, amid the void
High-poised; in form terrific, as in power!
BUT, as the keen hyæna, bent to hold
Afar, the fierce invaders from their prey,
In thought already seized: Argantia thus,
With Hecatæa, Atria, and thine arm,
Callenta, joining all their force; preserved
Till now, their leader's breathless corse, secure
From farther harm. Gerontes cast his eye

Wild on the victim as he pass'd; and rush'd
On Camber. Vortiger, in open day,
Fought by his side. The Trojan Prince relax'd
With toil, and breathing from the recent shock
Of combat, felt his mighty heart recoil,
Then first depress'd: scarce, at the hero's side,
Phorcas, and great Arpasias, stay'd to guard
His life; or lead their native bands to fight;
Such was the dread that seized them, and appall'd.
YET in himself collected, Camber spread
The shield before him, for defence prepared;
And had assail'd the giant King, perhaps,
Had in the fight o'ermatch'd him: but his troops
Bore not the charge. All, from Gerontes' hand,
And savage host, fled headlong: for unseen,
Though near the monarch, Moloch spread dismay
To every heart. He, to Gerontes' form,
And eyes, undreaded else, though flaming dire,
Gave seven-fold terror. As he raised his voice,
Terrific o'er the field, the demon swell'd
Its deathful accents.—'Haste!' the monarch cried,
'Our sire in yonder camp provides a prize.
'Tear up their feeble bulwarks; and avenge
'On all the race accursed, Leontia's fall.
'Their pigmy leader shrinks, and vainly hopes,
'That some deep cavern from our rage may screen
'His dastard head. Ye scorners of the Lord

'Of thunders! Neptune's mighty sons! pursue
'The flying herd, and sweep them from the land.'
FURIOUS he spoke; and raised indignant ire
In Camber's heart. He flew to every side,
Exhorting, chearing, threat'ning, but in vain,
His flying bands: back to the camp, they rush'd
With headlong haste; and bore the Prince along,
Madding with shame, and anger; to the foe
Alone, a grateful sight; who, while they roll'd
The tumult onwards, roar'd with horrid joy.
THE camp, so keenly sought, perhaps had proved
No sure retreat at last from barbarous power:
But that Evander, from his place survey'd
The rout; and in the hour of peril, stood
With Lesbia's numbers, as a rock. Though stiff
With all-subduing age, he shook the spear
Now in the front of battle; and repell'd
The flying legions. Fate so near in view,
Forbade their flight; and in the desperate hands,
Leagued with Gerontes, show'd their weakest foes.
As when a vessel, borne before the gale
By night; approaching near some hostile shore,
Stands full exposed to peril;—when the crew,
At morn, astonish'd, catch the shifting wind
Elate; and from the coast, already black
With numbers shouting; hold their course to sea,
Unheedful of their track: if from the prow,

They mark the wheeling surges; and behold
At hand, rude breakers on an unknown strand,
Portending instant ruin: from a death
So near, they turn at once, and strain to reach
Again the shore, their greatest dread so late;
But now their refuge: Prisons, whips, they deem
The slighter ills; and catch the gleam of hope,
Though faint, that points them onwards:—In their flight
Thus fared th' affrighted throng, by their own mates
Assail'd; and by the nearer fate, compell'd
To meet once more Gerontes, and his bands.

And now, the field had smok'd with human blood,
Profusely shed, while fiery Camber here,
Indignant from repulse, restored the fight,
Stirring the flame in every heart: and there,
The monarch madding with revenge, and ire,
Rush'd headlong on. But night o'ershading all,
Now bade their battle cease. Gerontes, spent
With rage and labour, saw th' attempt was vain
To shake the camp's strong ramparts, with a few,
Great though they seem'd, and daring. Vortiger
Who knew alone, to tame to reason's lore
The stern barbarian; show'd how justly plann'd
The site, how firm the solid mounds, disposed
Around th' extended circuit. All his powers
Combined, the humbled tyrant saw, and own'd
In thought, perhaps unequal to atchieve

A work so arduous. Hence, amid the calm
Of night, retiring with Leontia's corse,
He sought his own in silence: nor subdued
Less in his mind, and ruled by calmer thought,
Camber obsequious, call'd his host away,
Soon as Evander bade; convinced at last,
By dire experience, that the temperate voice
Of age, by wisdom sway'd, though folly deem
Its counsels cold, and timid; yet suggests
What judging reason prompts, and time matures.

WHILE mighty deeds, in distant parts perform'd,
Held all by turns employ'd; great Brutus, yet
Fix'd with his *central* bands, maintain'd his place
Against Romerus, and his sons of war.

STONES, and misshapen fragments of the rock,
Rent rudely from its side; boughs from their stock,
With fury wrench'd, knobbed and rough; with roots
Of antient oak, or ash, or lofty elm,
Torn from the parent soil; unwieldy forms,
Rear'd on the giants' brawny arms aloft,
And thrown, with force, unmatch'd by feebler men,
Earth's common offspring;—with their weight, o'erturn'd
All opposition. As a God in front,
Romerus drove, where'er he trode, the foe
In herded throngs before him. At his height,
His looks, they trembled: nor th' example fired
Of their great leader, who forbade his strength

A boundless range; and while Romerus shook
The Trojan host; broke on his bands behind,
And back recall'd him to his own. Thy deeds,
Great Brutus, struck not to thy warriours hearts
Proportion'd courage. Even the bravest shrunk;
The numbers wither'd at Romerus' glance,
And from his eye, or lifted mace, recoil'd.

HENCE, while the monarch view'd with heedful look,
The field on every side, and sent relief
Where call'd; the giant held his hand employ'd
In toil unceasing; while he tried his force
In combat; or when Brutus turn'd, assail'd
Th' inferiour leaders, who sustain'd, not more,
His charge, but, hid behind their shields, retired.

SAY, muse, what power withheld the warring Chiefs
From mortal battle, when opposed, they stood
In threat'ning semblance oft: and vainly sought
To work each other's fall! 'Twas she, who holds
Beneath her rule the far-extended Isle;
That scanning all the war, yet watchful, kept
The Trojan monarch still in sight. She struck,
Oft as Romerus met his arm in fight,
Dread, to the champion's else undaunted soul.
Hence shunning in his walk, great Brutus' spear,
He wreak'd his fury on the vulgar throng.
By his strong hand Ægistheus, Phormius bled,
Dash'd by one stroke on earth: Pisander press'd

The soil, o'erthrown, and panting on the ground.
Phineas, behind advancing, while an host
Inclosed Romerus, aim'd a mortal stroke,
Inglorious, at his back: but while he raised
The spear, Gobinus seized his lifted hand,
And tumbling headlong, gave his soul to air.
Oft had the host of Brutus, thus assail'd,
Fled from their foe; but while they held their sight
Fix'd on their great commander; and beheld
The spear, so wont to break the ranks of war,
Still waving in the van; they rose to hope:
And, though no soldier met the giant Chief
In equal combat, by the monarch fired
As erst, to high attempts; they stood with shields,
On shields high piled, and stay'd his fierce career.
As, when a mound of solid ice repells
Some river's course, that pours a torrent stream
Far o'er the frozen ocean; the strong flood
Collecting all its force, assaults the rock,
With many a swelling surge; but on its side,
The waves condensing, strengthen the rude mass
They strive in vain to shake: Romerus thus,
Foil'd in successive efforts, while the helm
Of Brutus blazed before him, saw his foes
Gathering from each attack increasing strength,
And firmer confidence. The power divine,
Thus, on each heart impress'd their sovereign's deeds,

And breathed new courage in the closing bands.
YET though restored, the war suspended stood
Still undetermined, for the care of all
On Brutus lay; and from each part, arrived
Successive messengers, with tidings fraught
Of various import, claiming in their turns
His ear, and just attention:—but the woes,
Destined to fall on his devoted host,
Ere crown'd with final conquest; now approach'd,
And gave short triumph to th' infernal crew.
FOR lo! terrific, as the star that shoots
Blue plagues, and scatters, from its fiery hair,
Sparks that pervade the vital tide; the man
Favour'd by heaven, advancing from the right,
(As wont, Zelohim in his front came on;)
Soon turn'd the scale of fight! A fatal deed
Was now atchieved, the source of many a woe!
AMONG the younger race, with females mix'd,
That heap'd unshapen masses on the field,
Their sires' or husbands' mighty arms; (a pile
Now raised with peril, as the tribe conceal'd
Deep in the forest, backward drove the throng,
That pouring eager from the fort, supplied
The rude materials;) thy adventurous son,
Romerus, yet unfit to rule the war,
Assumed the foremost place. In early youth,
Already, all the father stood confess'd

In his superiour size, and limbs, that braced
By time, had match'd him with the first in fame.
YOUNG, yet magnanimous; what time his mates
Fled when they saw Locrinus, in his might
Come onward shouting, with his host behind,
He staid, and stored the magazine of arms
With growing weapons; while he deem'd his life,
Within his father's mighty shade secure.
A Chief, Elpenor was his name; who stood
Amid Locrinus' band, th' unheeding youth
Struck, with a feather'd shaft, that deeply pierced
His side, by ribs that guard the vital parts,
Repell'd.—The Dardan, with indignant eye,
Mark'd, while he wrench'd the bloody dart, the hand
That gave it force, and cautious, while he scann'd
Th' assailer, hoped revenge. He watch'd his track
Intent, with thoughtful eye; and when he saw
The heedless boy, by calm experience yet
Untaught, diverging to the right; raised high
His spear:—Romerus saw it; but to ward,
Surpass'd his power. Already, on the wing
The weapon flew; the sire impatient sprung
To break its force; but in his arms, received
The falling youth; deep-sinking, in his groin
The point lay buried; while the vital stream
In torrents gushing, bathed the soil around.
As, when proud Carthage, now of arms despoil'd;

And crush'd by Roman power; beheld the foe,
Approach, to raze her venerable fanes,
The boast of many an age; when from the height
Of that time-hallow'd tower, whose spire o'erlook'd
The main; and glitter'd first with hostile arms;
The Carthaginian Chief beheld his wife,
His children dash'd; scanning with dizzy eye,
Their quivering limbs in air! What horrour froze
His heart, was thine, Romerus! Speechless stood,
Now first heart-pierced, the miserable sire;
And inly-groaning, rooted to the corse
His sight; and mark'd the lingering drop that bore
Life, and th' informing spirit from its frame.
Nor fail'd the giant brethren, Draco fierce,
And Acamas the mighty, and thine arm,
Gobinus, leagued with Berion, to defend,
While thus disarm'd, the father from the foe.

Meanwhile, the fiend, who to Androgeus spoke,
Amid th' assembled Chiefs, of aid divine;
His promise held in memory, yet survey'd
With his fell mates, the guardian of the Isle,
Informing all the host. He fear'd to meet
Her hand, in perilous fight so lately tried,
And known of matchless might. Essaying oft
To stop Locrinus' dire career; thy shield,
Zelohim, and the power divine, forbade
Th' attempt, and screen'd him from infernal guile.

But now, the long-predicted hour, ordain'd
By Heaven to try, ere yet with conquest crown'd,
Its favour'd host, approach'd; and Nature's Lord
Fulfill'd with sovereign sway his fix'd decree.

Hence, while the guardian of the land prepared
To raise great Brutus, and his godlike son,
To honour yet unequall'd, by the fall
Of all their foes; when now she saw all hearts
Depress'd, and final conquest full at hand;
While thus employ'd, an angel met her sight,
From heaven descending. Zariel was his name
Above. On plumage, splendent as the sun,
He came; and staying in mid air his flight,
Thus gave his message to her listening ear.

'Know, Queen imperial, He who rules the skies
'Forbids, that more you hold th' infernal throng
'Back from their purpose. Let them range at large,
'A time unlicensed, on the field. The Lord
'Of Nature thus determines. When He wills
'To check by you the fiends unhallow'd course,
'He knows at once to give command, and power.'

He said: and to his words, the spirit divine
Gave prompt obedience; for celestial minds,
Unlike the changeful race of erring man,
Know not repining thought, but freely yield
Pure homage unreluctant, to the voice
Of wisdom infinite. The guardian, hence,

To those beneath her guidance, spoke her will,
To yield th' infernals scope; till He whose word
Within its deep, and roomy bed, confines
The roaring ocean, to their mad career
Prescribed the bound, and swept them from the scene.

THIS pass'd, while yet Romerus ceased from deeds;
And torn by warring passions, eyed the corse
Of his lost son, now cold, and stretch'd supine.
Before him, tower'd Locrinus in his might;
Around, like Jove, when guilty nations wake
His anger, scattering fate: yet numbers screen'd
With interposing hands, their Chief from harm.
Each prized that leader's safety as his own,
Their bulwark in assault; and fear'd to lose
Their greatest; deeming in his life, the fate
Of all involved. While as intranced, he stood,
And inly groaning, hoped that vital breath
Yet quiver'd in the clay-cold breast; his mates
As with a wall begirt him, and secured.

BUT, yet unknowing of the death that stay'd
Romerus' hand, Locrinus burst along
Impetuous. O'er the field, was heard his voice
Announcing victory. 'Ye warriours, bend
'To this last work your spirits,' thus he cried;
'Th' auxiliars fly dispersed; and nought remains,
'But that we triumph o'er a barbarous race,
'Now left unaided. Conquest waits to crown

'One bold attack. Advance; nor dread the foe.'

THUS while he spoke, the giant, as a wolf
Impatient of restraint, that gnaws the chain;
Grating with desperate teeth, the solid ore
That yields; then rushing fearless to the wild;
Came to the van of fight. Around he cast
His eyes, and saw beneath their glorious Chiefs,
The Trojans ranged in sight; and near the Prince,
Thy blood-stain'd spear, behind his forward shield,
Elpenor, screen'd from harm. Thrice, at his head
He struck, and thrice th' impenetrable orb
Sustain'd the shock unmoved. Locrinus waved
In scornful act his buckler, as he strode.

As through the fires of Etna, he who stands
Safe on the shores of Lipari; beholds
Its towering summit unimpair'd, though red
In flame; nor shaken in the general wreck;
Such, through the light that wrapt his form divine,
Locrinus stood confess'd! What time he raised
His lance aloft, with terror all recoil'd;
As, from th' Herculean bow the victims fled,
When he, the friend of its great master, drew
The fateful arrow to the mark, nor fail'd
To strike. The hero, at strong Berion, aim'd
The point, as by Romerus' side he tower'd,
With wild eyes, glaring through the shagged locks
That hid his forehead. Through the breast it reach'd

A vital part; and backward as he fell,
A dying murmur gave his soul to air.
Now from the Trojan host, a general shout
Was heard. Great Brutus call'd them to advance
In close arrangement. Nought appear'd in sight,
But spears thick bristling, and compacted shields:
Gerontes was afar, and Vortiger,
Skill'd in th' extreme of peril, to advise
The safest course. Alone Romerus stood,
Now first dismay'd; and stamping on the soil,
As desperate in his rage:—'Thou God,' he cried,
'Who promised victory; dost thou betray
'Thy sons, and mock us with delusive hope?
'O! hear a father's voice, whoe'er thou art
'That rulest supreme in heaven! Avenge my cause
'On yonder foes, yet glorying in the deed
'That strikes this bosom with unwonted pangs;
'Then launch a thunderbolt, and let me fall,
'But fall, in death revenged.'—He said, for grief
Now pierced his mighty heart; and on his cheek,
His furrow'd cheek, the starting dew betray'd
Thy triumph, Nature! Azrael heard his voice;
Nor longer by the guardian Queen with-held,
Heaven now consenting, gave the wish'd reply.
A WARRIOUR'S form the subtle fiend assumed,
And seem'd of Albion's greatest sons. In arms
Of burnish'd steel, he stood completely clad,

And on his helm, that sparkled from afar,
A sculptured sun appear'd. In stature, raised
Beyond his Albian friends, he took each eye.
Broad was his spreading chest, and firm his tread,
As one not to be daunted, or appall'd
By human prowess. In one hand, he bore
Aloft, an ensign that announced some deed
Of high import. All, even Romerus, view'd
With heedful eyes the stranger. First, apart
He call'd the giant Chief, and spoke his will.

'I COME to draw yon conqueror from the field;
'And bring the promised aid. Bid your fierce mates
'Be still. Obey my signals; but employ
'In my defence, no weapon. Yield us way.
'When I return, and give the sign to fight
'Perhaps with morn, for now the shade of night
'Is near; the hour of vengeance is at hand.'

THUS, while the Demon spoke, Romerus knew
In him, the Power that on their counsels broke
Abrupt; and to their sinking hearts, convey'd
The hope of conquest. On the fiend he gazed,
Nor gave reply; for native pride, unused
To bear controul, even though a God imposed
The rigid rule, and promised heavenly aid
Brook'd not observance. Yet, its voice suppress'd,
He nodded now assent, and bent his eye
To mark what new commotion might ensue.

And now the stranger turning, loudly call'd
Locrinus forth, as if before unseen,
Or yet in fight untried. He held in sight
The Prince, advancing, with unalter'd brow:
Nor dreaded now his Guide Divine, allow'd
Alone, to guard the hero's life from snares,
Or dangers imminent. Between both hosts,
They met. Locrinus, in presageful thought,
Divined some trial near.—Ere yet the fight
Commenced, the Dardan, not unmoved, began:

'Say, thou, who call'st Locrinus to the field,
'As if already conquering; what thy name,
'Thy fame in arms? At thy request, he comes,
'Yet not perchance to part, ere thou hast felt
'A hand in battle not untried, and own'd
'Thy hope precipitant.—Meantime, I mark
'Some information in thine eye, that seems
'With joy to glance. If thou hast aught to speak,
'That may import the general cause, declare
'Thine errand:—that announced, we meet in war.'

He said. The haughty Albian, pleased to speak;
As one prepared, with ready voice replied:

'My name, great Prince, avails not. What concerns
'Thyself, I come with purpose to reveal.

'Deep in a vale, amid the inland wild
'I pass'd my happy days; nor while I led
'My flock, with morn to graze the mountains side,

'Did e'er the mind in still retreat, conceive
'Of hosts, or battle aught. Gerontes' race,
'Our friends, not fierce oppressors, still at hand
'Gave when we wish'd, assistance, nor denied
'To grant protection from each mightier foe.
'THUS fled our days in quiet, till the fame
'But late was heard in our sequester'd vales,
'Of foreign hosts innumerous, that with swarms
'Of warriours, darken'd all th' extended bay.
'Your battles met our ears; and of a few
'In flight, some told us of the monarch's deeds,
'And thine, (if from thy port, I judge aright,)
'In arms. This heard, I braced these limbs in mail,
'And instant sought the field: but what occurr'd
'While onward journeying, thou perhaps may'st deem
'Of some slight import. Hear in few, the tale:
'WHILE yet, amid the wilderness, I held
'My course still forward, guided by the sounds
'That thunder'd war and combat; I beheld
'Not distant far, two travellers, who pursued
'Their way with hasty step, as if they wish'd
'To shun observance. One was clad in mail,
'And bore a warriour's semblance. On his path,
'I burst abrupt, and mark'd a beauteous maid
'Behind him, fairer than th' enraptured bard
'E'er feign'd of nymphs that haunt Elysian vales.
'Alcestes was her guide. I heard him call

'His charge Almeria; and the captive fair,
'Still in soft accents sighs Locrinus' name.
'I MET in arms the guide, and left him low
'In yonder wood; then rushing, seized the nymph,
'A prize divine, who struggling in my grasp,
'Oft call'd Locrinus to her aid—in vain.
'Look on that batter'd casque, if, as I deem,
'Thou art Locrinus; and behold the man
'Who keeps in bonds the fair, uninjured else,
'Who merits all thy love; and laid thy friend
'In dust, a prey to glut the fowls of air.
'THEE, too, I call to combat on the plain,
'Great as thou seem'st in every act! Approach,
'And I will meet thine arm in equal fight.
'Whence if I rise victorious, I decide
'Thine, and thy people's fate: but if subdued,
'Be thine these arms, my kingdom, and the maid
'I hold in durance.—Now advance thy spear.'
HE said, and shook in air, the helmet stain'd
With blood. Locrinus knew the purple plumes,
Or deem'd he knew them, soil'd by dust, and gore,
That show'd Alcestes in the ranks of war.
He saw; nor doubtful of the stranger's tale,
A moment stood, as one of sense bereaved,
Suspended, quivering; scarce his nerves retain'd
Their hold, such horror froze his heart! The spirit
Unknown, who wrought th' eventful deed, o'erlook'd

His work, in thought rejoicing. But the plan
Was yet half-finish'd: for he knew 'twas vain
To seek Locrinus' life, secured by fate
From fraud, or force. He came not, but to part
From his own bands the hero, and deprive
His troops of victory, so nearly gain'd
In hope; their mightiest from the fight with-held.
HENCE, rush'd the stranger, with the speed of fire,
Fierce on the Trojan Prince; nor left him space
To meditate his part. On his broad shield,
That shield appalling hosts, that wont to flame
On battle's perilous front, announcing fate,
He struck uninjured. All, with wonder eyed
A scene so new; and deem'd the Albian rash,
And prodigal of life, to cope so near
With one, by heaven with matchless force endow'd.
MEANWHILE, Zelohim hovering o'er his charge,
Restored the man; but of th' impending ill
To warn him, unapprised, or in his course
Yet check th' infernal; heaven's superiour Lord
Forbade.—Locrinus, prudent in his ire,
Wish'd not to slay th' assailer, but subdue,
And as the purchase of his life, compel
To give Almeria back: So fix'd, he strove
To seize him still receding, and secure
In strong embracement: but with guiding hand
To send th' unerring javelin to its mark

He shunn'd: and now began th' unequal war.
But heedful of th' intent, the subtle fiend
Feign'd sudden dread; and from Locrinus' grasp,
Just when the hero, like a lion, sprung
Fierce on his prey; escaping, backward fled
A space, then turning, sent his lance in air,
And added scornful taunts, that stung the soul
Of his great foe, to madness. 'Boaster!' thus
He cried, 'why lags in thy redoubted hand,
'The spear so dreaded once?—Hear'st thou thy fair,
'Thy loved one, thine Almeria?—Hark!—She calls!
'See on that gory blade, the drop that warm'd
'Alcestes' heart!—Approach! it thirsts for thine!'
Thus speaking, in his front the weapon waved,
And seem'd in flight alternate; erring still,
Yet drew the Dardan onwards. Still, he hoped
To seize the wary Albian; or impress
On his unguarded side, or arm outstretch'd,
Some wound, though slight, to check his feign'd retreat;
Yet short of life. Hence, now he gave the dart
To fly, anon; still heedful, sent the lance
Dismiss'd with temperate hand, to reach its aim.
But first, the Trojan Prince beheld surprised,
The points diverging from their mark. His foe
Now seem'd at hand, and now afar removed;
Yet still receding, while the giant race
Stood by Romerus' stern command, unmoved,

And gave the warriours scope. At last, they reach'd
The woodland's utmost skirt. The stranger plunged
Amid the shade. Locrinus pausing, eyed
Its depth, while darkness slow-descending, veil'd
The face of things; he eyed it, and a sigh
Broke from his heart; when deeming pursuit vain,
He turn'd, resolved to join the Trojan host,
And leave to Jove's protecting hand, the charge
Of what he prized the most. He heard behind,
Sounds as of ceasing uproar, and before
Survey'd a wilderness forlorn, and wild.

And now the Dardan Chief had reach'd his friends
Through interposing foes, when far within
The forest, female accents met his ear,
Plaintive and tremulous; that spoke of woe,
Imploring aid. He listen'd, when the sounds
Approaching near, came murmuring on the wind.
But ah! what new emotions in his heart
Arose, when through the shade, Almeria's voice
'Plain'd on the gale; and on his startled eye
Her form, alternate opening, and conceal'd
Half, as it seem'd; convey'd to every sense
Alarm!—Her hand now dimly-waving, seem'd
To call him forward, and disclose the path
That fill'd the space between; her robe to swell
Loose on the gale, her words to break in sounds
Suppress'd, that quivering spoke Locrinus' name.

Soon as that name was heard, the sound repell'd
All care, save of the present; and the Chief
Amid the dark pursued the flying maid;
Till now the last weak murmur sunk remote,
And silence reign'd around.—Locrinus stood
As one bewilder'd, when perplexing paths
Meet in a land unknown, and winding, point
To varying lines: and midnight now o'erspread
The solitary scene. The thought of those
Behind him left, struck to his heart dismay.
But, o'er th' extended wilderness around
No track was known: He roam'd as fate led on,
And strong with desperate thought, pursued his way,
Still pressing onwards: nor the tangled shrubs,
Nor briers close-branching, stay'd his course; he deem'd
In every sound Almeria's voice convey'd;
And hoped, with morn to hear, what might confirm
His steady purpose, from the spoiler's grasp
To tear his captive victim, the reward
Of glorious deeds in battle; as the last,
And noblest meed, that gives the victor fame.

While thus their mightiest fared, his friends beheld
His fate; yet hoped with morn, to see the Prince
Return, as wont in triumph, to the field.
The monarch with considerate eye survey'd
His son's high deeds; nor but with wonder, mark'd
That of the hostile crew, no hand had dared,

Even when Locrinus through their numbers drove
Alone the flying Albian, to assail
The warriour, parted from his own. He fear'd,
Th' unwonted sufferance veil'd some deep design.
Hence singling Sparta's leader, known alike
For courage, as for wisdom, from the throng;
A charge of high import, he bade the Greek
Fulfil.—'Go,' thus he said, 'select a few,
'But chosen followers:—Pierce with these, the depth
'Of yonder forest, whither in the chase
'Of Albion's flying Chief, Locrinus plunged,
'Precipitant in course.—Him, if assail'd,
'Assist; if erring in his path, direct,
'What time the lunar orb shall give the scenes
'To view, with you to hold an equal way.'

He spoke; and prone, of Albion's sons to gain
Sure tidings, what the laws, the rites, the forms,
The rules they practised, and the Gods they served;
He bade Arimon in his range, essay
To seize some straggler of Androgeus' host,
And on the foe, by courteous arts, prevail
To give intelligence of all he wish'd
To learn;—to Alban, and his friend, he gave
Command by him, to keep their troop prepared
With day, for action at th' appointed sign.

Thus while he spoke, the shades of night involved
Each host. Gerontes from the camp return'd

Not without gladness, learnt from his compeers
Locrinus' fate, now from his host disjoin'd
By him, the God, who promised aid divine;
Nor to return with speed. Romerus ceased
From warlike deeds; yet now possess'd the plain
With his fierce crew, impatient for the dawn.
Nor fail'd Androgeus, on the right to hold
The war suspended. Albion's scatter'd bands
Again restored the day, and kept the field
Beneath their mighty leader; all resolved
With morn to fight, and leave to heaven its end.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK XIV.—

THE ARGUMENT.

EUGENIUS, and ALBANUS, make an excursion, during the silence of night, into the Albian camp, accompanied by ARIMON the Spartan leader, in order to seize some prisoner, from whom they might gain useful information. After various attempts, they seize an Albian, named TRIGONTES, the Brother of SEGONAX, who being encouraged, and assured of good usage, gives them information concerning the original state of the natives; the first arrival of the GIANTS; their oppression of the ALBIANS; and the final separation of the latter from them, under ANDROGEUS, with whom they occupy the western coasts of the Island. He concludes, by giving them a short account of the principal Druidical rites, and ceremonies, which they had been in use of practising; and leaves them not without hope, that the ALBIANS might be induced to join them, in their attempt, to expel GERONTES and his followers from the Island. In order to forward this purpose, he is sent back free to his Associates; and morning approaching, ARIMON returns with this intelligence to the camp.

WHILE through the day, the warring legions toil'd
In doubtful strife; th' Athenian Prince, who held
With his young mate, a place beyond the hosts,
Secure and close; stood with his troop, prepared

To yield obedience to the leading sign
Of Brutus, as the monarch gave command.
Hence, near the woodland's verge, Eugenius took
His place, and mark'd the ensign wide display'd,
Whose waving colours show'd their course. He saw
The standard fixt amid the central bands,
Nor once receding backwards, as the sign
Of rout, or forward to the woodland moved;
The glad presage of conquest. He beheld
The scene, himself conceal'd; and kept the few
Beneath his rule, impatient as they seem'd
To mix in fight, from battle. All was still
With these, while death and tumult reign'd around;
Save that their shouts, and shining arms, with-held
The throng from action, whom the fortress pour'd
Abroad, in unremitting act, to raise
Piles, rudely heap'd with implements of war.

When now, with night, each leader saw the storm
A while suspended, though with morn to rage
Once more, 'twas thus they judged, in all its power:
Within the forest's deep recess, they met
From all apart; when Alban thus began:

'Feels not, O friend, thy throbbing heart, as mine,
'Impatience; while with-held from warlike deeds,
'By some ennobling act to rise to fame?
'Oft, from the sage, who taught my mind to prize
'Beyond all other good, a soul unstain'd

'By vice, I learnt, that dearer to his kind
'Is he, who tames the savage, or unites
'The fierce and madding nations, in the band
'Of peace; than is the warriour, though endow'd
'With matchless strength in combat, or with skill,
'To range embattl'd legions on the plain;
'Who desolates the earth, and sends his name,
'His glorious name, to each succeeding age,
'Engraved in characters of blood. Desire
'To save the nations, now suggests a plan;
'In hostile combatants, to still the din
'Of arms, and spread o'er all the settling land
'The calm of peace. But hear it, and advise.
'Of those, who breathing fierce defiance, meet
'Our powers in fight; I deem our Albian foes
'A generous people, by some false report
'Perhaps, misled to join a barbarous rout;
'To them in manners unallied. To us
'These bear a just resemblance; and their rites,
'Their forms, their habits, and their deeds reveal'd,
'Their sires, whence sprung, and what the Gods they serve;
'These known, may in a common cause, unite
'As friends the martial race, now leagued with those
'They hold in slight regard; and serve with fear.
'Hence, to this heart some power divine conveys
'The hope, (thus fancy of the Gods decree
'Perhaps decides;) that if we seek their camp

'With bold, and steady purpose; and explore
'Each part, befriended by the lunar ray;
'Propitious Jove may guide us to the tent
'Of some illustrious Chief, to sleep resign'd
'Amid his vassals; or expose the track
'Of some unheeding wanderer to the view;
'Who, urged by gentle words, when from his own
'Convey'd, and won by courteous acts, to tell
'What truths we wish to learn; may bring at last
'Foes now profess'd, to join in mutual league,
'And from the land expel a barbarous kind.

'SUCH is my counsel, friend; if judged by thee
'Rash, or infirm, I give it to the winds,
'Not more to be resumed; but if approved,
'Say what forbids, while gathering night extends
'As now her shade, to try without delay
'The perilous attempt?—We gain renown,
'Should we atchieve the deed, and save the waste
'Of blood, by meeting hosts: or failing; yet
'Thus to have dared is noble; to have used
'Means that conduce to speed the general weal.'

THUS, while he spoke, th' Athenian Prince beheld
The youth, with pleasure, and surprise combined:
Wondering, in age so green, and immature,
To mark the traces of discerning thought
So deeply graved: and feelings that display
The love of human kind. A while he paused,

Revolving in his mind, whate'er occurr'd
Of danger, or of hope, to bring the scheme
To some successful end.—But while he mused,
Amid the calm of night, was heard afar
The tread of feet advancing, and to them
Holding their onward track. Listening, they stood,
Then call'd, though softly, as the sound approach'd,
And knew Arimon answering. Each with joy
Sprung to his friend's embrace; and soon the band
Surround the Spartan troop, whose Prince disclosed
To all, what varying scenes had mark'd the day:
But chief the warriour made Locrinus' deeds,
And fate, his theme. Of him, he deem'd it vain
To roam in search unceasing, when no trace
Appear'd to guide him; and the rising moon
Gave feeble light. Hence, staying here his course,
And singling out the leaders, he rehearsed
What Brutus gave in charge. 'Friends,' thus he said,
'In me behold, if resolute to search
'This hour, the hostile tents; a mate, prepared
'To join your enterprise, and give what aid,
'This prompting heart, and ready hand affords.'

Not less Eugenius, now revolving all,
In his associate gloried, and received
With joy his proffer'd boon; than on the scene
He mused in wonder. In the thought, conceived
At once by Brutus, and the youthful Chief,

So far disjoin'd, and one desire to save
The warring nations; with discerning eye
He traced th' Eternal's guidance. Hence, he grasp'd
Each offer'd hand, and cautious, thus replied:

'HEAV'N grant, to every scheme by Brutus framed,
'Th' effect! yet know a perilous scene is near.
'What time diverging in the shades of night,
'We range yon camp;—no mind of future scenes
'Presageful, warns us of th' event, or says
'What fate awaits us; to be seized, or seize,
'To walk, amid the slumb'ring host secure,
'And gain some captive; or awake to arms
'A warlike race; and by embattled hosts
'O'erpower'd, to suffer, not as noble foes,
'Who fight alone to conquer; but as spies,
'Who from the glance of all-pervading day,
'With deeds a-kin to darkness, meanly shrink
'Beneath her guilt-concealing mask.—The time
'Hence warns to tread with caution, and forbids
'Rude, or precipitant approach. Myself,
'Should ye approve, will forward lead your course.
'To us the site of yonder camp is known,
'And paths, that winding through the forest, shade
'From sight who scans it with observant view.
'*Thou*, then, who *lead'st* in battle, here, beneath
'Albanus may'st advance, a favour'd youth,
'Beloved of Jove, who guards him, and inspires.'

Thus speaking, to his troops th' Athenian turn'd,
Yet of his purpose uninform'd; and gave
Command to watch with close attentive thought
Each light, each movement in the hostile camp.
If aught of meditated guile they saw,
Or nightly inroad tried, he bade, with speed
To warn the monarch of th' approaching ill;
And rouze his powers to action. Parting thus,
He bade the band obey Lysander's rule,
While with his bold associates, he approach'd
The Albian tents, and learnt what might avail.

All thus prepared, the Chiefs, in silence trode
The solitary waste, and held their way,
Though yet remote, along th' extended vale,
Where with his host Androgeus lay secure.

Now shone, serene on heaven's unclouded void,
The Queen of Night, and on the world beneath,
Look'd from her throne effulgent. Smiled around
The vale, the forest, and the pine-clad hill,
In the mild languor of her gentler noon
Display'd. The friends thus aided, held their way,
Till now the guards around the sleeping sons
Of Albion placed, along the desart roll'd
Slow peals; and nearer as they came, their tread
And clanging arms were heard, that left the camp,
All care subsiding to serene repose.
Cautious, around the trench they moved unseen,

Studious to find some breach, or slighter wall
With ease o'er-leap'd, that to the throng within
Gave ready entrance; where the daring few,
In silence moving, to some leader's tent
Might pierce, and thence convey a captive foe.

VAIN was the search; for walls of solid earth
Behind the trench arose, and held inclosed
The sons of Albion. Stakes compacted close,
And on the bulwark rear'd, from entrance barr'd,
Even should they pass the trench, the wary spies.
They saw the peril: and the guards disposed
In every part, to rouze the sleeping train
At aught unusual heard, or half-descried.

IN doubt the leaders stood, and unresolved
Yet of their course, still roam'd with heedful eye
Around the bulwark; when the well-known sound
Of feet approaching, bade them pause. They shrunk
At once from sight, within the wood conceal'd.
When lo! a troop of Albians, clad in arms,
Came onwards, dreadless as it seem'd, of ill
So near! Their ruler, far before the rest
Advancing, held not one determined path;
But now diverging, plunged amid the shade
A space; then quick-returning, took his way
Along th' adjacent field; and gave his mates
Th' alternate sign to stand, or forward hold
Their course; in all obsequious. Talk beguiled

The hours, while as at ease they pass'd along.
THIS seen, the cautious strangers, hid from sight,
Close as a lion couching for his prey,
Stood, of each act observant: all resolved,
What time, th' unconscious Albian might diverge
Within the wood unguarded, and alone,
Instant to catch the moment; and at once
Rushing, to seize him; and convey with speed,
Through paths untried, and devious, to their own.
As on the bank of Niger, or of Nile
Sedge-crown'd, the Crocodile, that seems asleep
To him, who marks, amid the quivering leaves,
His scaled mail far-gleaming; yet descries
His prey; and watchful of each movement, waits
The time to spring impetuous from his shade,
And rend it unawares: the Chiefs thus hoped
The favouring instant of assault, when near
Their place, the heedless wanderer might approach
With unsuspecting heart; and rushing foes
Forbid return. What time within their power
He came; Albanus darting, wrench'd in hatse
The ready weapon from his hand, and cried,
'Yield, and be safe; death, instant death, alone
'On thy resistance waits.' Breathless, and pale,
This way and that, th' affrighted Albian turn'd
His head. His voice alarm'd the troop behind:
Deep in the wood they plunged; but like the fire

Of heaven, Arimon laid the foremost low,
Himself unseen. While yet the next in place
Chear'd his astonish'd mates, Eugenius' dart
Arrests his life. With sudden dread o'erpower'd,
The few in haste dispersed: Some God they deem'd
Incensed, and with unsated ire, prepared
To work their ruin. Hence, they fled amain
Back to the camp, and left their Prince behind.

MEANWHILE, young Alban high in hope, repass'd
His track; with gentle accents as he went,
Chearing the captive Albian. Soon he saw
His brave associates near. The warriours met,
And with their new companion, soon rejoin'd
The watchful cohort in the shade disposed.

HERE when arrived, and all around survey'd,
A scene of rest, and peace; th' Athenian bade
His soldiers rest; then with his friends retired
Apart. Their captive still alarm'd, though struck
With wonder more, at all he heard, and view'd,
Pursued their steps in silence.—On a height
They sat; whence, through the foliage, thinly spread,
As near the forest's bound; the hostile camp
Was seen afar extended, glittering here
With tents, descried beneath the lunar beam:
While there, a mighty people held in scorn
The work of feebler hands; and stretch'd on earth,
Supine and dreadless, dozed the night away,

Each with his arms at hand. No voice was heard,
That gave alarm. Suspense, and silence held
All fix'd; when to his guest, th' Athenian Prince
Placid and meek, with temperate words began:

'WHATE'ER thine office, stranger, or thy name,
'Know thou art safe from harm. Thy friends, we count
'A generous people, hardy, brave, and free;
'Unlike their barbarous, and fierce allies
'In manners, as in form; whence we behold
'Their close affiance, with the lawless herd
'Of giant powers, with wonder, at a scene
'So strange. To sever from this hated race,
'The sons of Albion, and in league unite
'With our own host, a nation versed in arms
'As we, and skill'd in arts of gentler kind,
'Is our first aim. Our monarch gave command
'Thus judging, not o'er yonder camp, to spread
'The rage of slaughter unobserved, or bear
'To chains and bondage, some defenceless train;
'But seize, with Jove befriending, as our prize,
'Some mightier captive of no vulgar name;
'From him to learn, whate'er may tend to form
'An union lasting, and secure. This end
'Once gain'd, our powers combined, may meet in fight
'Yon proud blasphemers of the Lord of heaven;
'And tame them, or subdue. Thine aspect speaks
'Thee what our sovereign wish'd; a warriour, free,

'Perhaps of noble lineage. Then, sincere,
'Speak of your favour'd nation, whence derived;
'Declare their rites, their manners, and their forms
'Of due observance to the God supreme.
'What of their mighty ruler, who appears
'To his own kindred, unallied, in aught
'But giant shape; thou know'st, impartial tell,
'And count as friends whom thou behold'st around.'

THUS while Eugenius spoke, the stranger gain'd
New hope; nor on his victors gazed with fear,
As when surprised at first, and from his own
By force disjoin'd. The Chief's complacent eye,
His voice, his mild demeanour, reassured
His calmer thoughts; and while he mark'd a troop
In acts so courteous, as the Trojans seem'd,
And like his mates in arms; a warriour's love,
That holds the brave, within its strait embrace
Inclosed, now warm'd his heart. Nor long he stay'd
As one that mused, but thus sincere, replied:

'YE mighty leaders of a glorious host,
'Not if I rightly judge, for power renown'd
'More, than for truth and generous deeds revered;
'Hear what I speak ingenuous, of a race
'Yet known to you alone by warlike feats,
'Though skill'd in nobler arts. *Attentive* hear!

'KNOW first, in me, you see a Prince who owns
'One sire with Segonax, the first in place,

'Of Albion's *native* sons; Trigontes named
'Among the Albian host. Beneath his rule,
'I left Plynlymmon's flower-enamell'd vales:
'Bless'd vales, that to the lowing herds alone,
'Or harmless flocks resound; and held my course
'With those I led, to this far distant land.
'THOUGH now we range the western hills, confined
'Within a scanty circuit; yet these shores
'Were once our own. Ours was that varied scene
'With streams, and lawns; with interchanging hills,
'And spreading woods embrown'd: our fathers held
'Through many an age, amid the branching oaks
'Their empire here. Yon giant King at last,
'With his dread followers, borne by prosperous winds,
'In vessels rudely framed, though as they deem'd
'Impell'd by mighty Neptune, reach'd the shore:
'And treading horrid on the coast, appall'd
'With shouts, and deaf'ning uproar, every heart,
'Thrill'd at their sight, their voice, and forms abhorr'd.
'Still as my sire disclosed the dreadful tale,
'Known in his better days; remembrance brings
'Before rapt fancy, each successive scene:
'Even now, I see great Neptune's mighty race,
'What time the rocks of Albion met their view,
'Amid the black surge plunging, as in scorn
'Of Gods, and men, and raised above the tide,
'Its waves assailing their broad chests in vain.

'As stands the mountain ash, with wide spread arms
'Exposed, when mist, or drifting winds o'ershade
'The trunk secure; the Albians lined the shores
'In arms; prepared, from their assault to guard
'Their wives, their children, and their native land.
'But when Gerontes, (thus the sire rehearsed
'His tale, in words still on this listening ear
'That seem to vibrate;) brandish'd on the shore
'His mace; and round him flock'd his dire compeers,
'The long waste echoing to their yell; when near
'We saw Romerus, and the tower-like forms
'Of ocean's giant offspring; for we judged
'Now, that the waves had screen'd them, and propell'd:
'These when we eyed, all in their youthful days,
'Their Chief alone approaching to his prime,
'The spirit died within us. From our hands
'Their useless javelins fell; nor even our priests
'As Gods revered, had long with-held from flight
'Blind and precipitate, th' affrighted sons
'Of Albion: but suspense, and wonder, kept
'All still; when one, among the mightiest foes
'Seem'd, as announcing peace, to tame their rage.
'T'was he, to whom our troops assembled yield
'Unforced obedience now; Androgeus named,
'Who wrought this change unhoped. With pitying eye
'He scann'd our tribes, devoted as they seem'd
'To sate a barbarous race, in heart elate,

'And versed in slaughter; and with-held the throng,
'While yet we stood suspended, and dismay'd,
'From hostile acts.—Uninjured, thus he said,
'These natives of the land, a harmless race,
'Will, to our view, disclose the varying scenes
'Of this new region;—but provoked, revenge
'Will fire their bosoms, and impel their hands
'To work destructive deeds! His pleading saved
'That hour, from death our else devoted kind;
'But not from bondage, shame, and deep dismay.
'MEANWHILE, in sight, new vessels with their freight
'Of mighty forms, appear'd. They reach'd the shore:
'And stood, in number, as in size, an host
'Not to be match'd by our united powers,
'Had then this Island pour'd from all her coasts,
'Her fiercest sons abroad; far less, by us,
'Who held a land yet waste, though of extent
'Unknown, and wish'd, though not unskill'd in arms,
'To practise peaceful arts, and live at ease.
'WHILE yet, in troops along the coast disposed,
'We bore the semblance of defence alone,
'Not boldly daring, to provoke the war
'With foes so dreaded; we beheld the Chief
'Whose words we deem'd had check'd the madding crew,
'Advancing from the strand. He waved his hand,
'As one, who bent on peaceful schemes, bespoke
'A fixt attention; nor with savage pride

'Came on, or fierce demeanour. As he moved
'Onward, with solemn step, our warriours met
'Unarm'd the leader, and convey'd within
'Th' encircling numbers, unappall'd.—Serene,
'He then announced his errand, and forbade
'From his rough kind, while unprovoked, to dread
'Of peril aught; and gave his hand, the pledge
'Of amity, and peace.'—'Cast then aside,
'What of defiance breathes, or rude repulse,
'And yield unforced submission, to a power
'Whom ye resist in vain; and by th' attempt
'Incite to vengeance, ruled by native rage.'
'OBSERVANT of his words, we gave the throng
'Beneath Gerontes, with their barbarous King,
'A seeming welcome: yet we placed afar
'Our wives, our children, from the giants' search,
'In Albion's middle regions, where they dwelt
'Secure, and pass'd in peace the flying hours.
'MEANWHILE Androgeus, while his brethren fierce
'Traversed the chearless wastes in quest of prey,
'And talk'd of bloody deeds; intent to learn
'Our manners, forms, and rites; attentive, heard
'What we disclosed; nor without reverence view'd
'Our priests, the ministers of heaven. He loved
'Our race, and gave protection, in the hour
'Of peril; when the savage kind oppress'd
'Our people, crush'd beneath the lawless rod

'Of force, by thought, and reason unrestrain'd.
'When toiling at their fence, he check'd the rage
'Of their stern monarch; and o'ermatch'd the wiles
'Of subtle Vortiger, to mischief prone;
'And bent on purposes, that might effect
'Our ruin in th' event. Unmoved, he bore,
'While thus employ'd, the scorn of his compeers:
'And when the shades of sober eve prevail'd;
'Oft, with our bards, the willing Chief retired,
'To hear the tale of ancient days rehearsed,
'And drink the music of the melting lyre,
'With ear unsated. For in early youth,
'Left on th' Hesperian land by his fell sire;
'An Albian sage, protected from the hands
'Of cruel spoilers, on his heart impress'd
'The love of virtuous deeds; and taught to feel
'Even then the power of soul-subduing song.
'MEANWHILE Gerontes, and his giant train,
'With terrour once beheld, we now survey'd
'With scorn. Impatient, of the tasks imposed
'By our stern lords, we meditated plans
'Of great revenge; and deem'd to meet our foes
'With sword, and shield, and from the land expel
'A tribe though high in prowess, yet unskill'd
'In war. Nor aught had from th' attempt with-held
'Our ardent hearts, but that the deed displeased
'Androgeus, when reveal'd. He loved his own,

'Though hopeless of their change; and while he wish'd
'Perhaps in secret, with our aid, to rule
'The land with sovereign sway; he fear'd to try
'With theirs, our force in battle; and sustain
'The dreadful conflict with unequal powers.
'HENCE, pondering long, at last the Chief resolved
'To leave his old companions, and retire
'Amid the inland regions of the waste,
'With those he deem'd his friends. At once, he fix'd
'His choice; and secret, gave our host command,
'With morn to meet him, clad in shining mail,
'As those prepared for combat, if compell'd
'To try this last resource.—We heard elate,
'His welcome mandate, and prepared to stand
'With morn in splendent arms, with joy resumed.
'NOT sooner, on the ruddy orient, flamed
'Her light effulgent, than our tribes convened,
'While yet the giant host supinely lay,
'Sunk deep in rest; and on the forest's edge,
'In warlike semblance, stood arranged. Alone
'Androgeus stay'd amid his old compeers,
'To mark their fierce demeanour, and to still,
'Or by persuasive counsel, or by arms,
'The voice of tumult, and resentful ire.
'Nor long we paused, when from their slumbers roused,
'The savage people strode, to sight exposed,
'Each from his hut; and call'd our subject race,

'Like slaves, that gather at their masters voice;
'To ply their wonted task. They call'd, but heard
'No voice in answer. In amaze, they cast
'Their eyes abroad; when lo! with helm and shield,
'A mighty nation stood prepared for fight,
'In aspect resolute! With calm disdain
'They moved; and breathed defiance on the foe.
'ERE yet their wonder ceased, and clamorous noise
'Was heard as wont, and uproar in their fort;
'Androgeus strode before them, cased in steel
'Framed by our hands; and wielding in his grasp,
'A spear, proportion'd to the God-like arm
'That bore with ease its weight: thus fenced, he met
'Their rage, revealing with intrepid heart,
'What moved a freeborn race, to claim the right
'By Nature's liberal hand, conferr'd on all;
'To spurn the proud oppressor, and repel,
'By indignation roused, his lawless might;
'No more, to crouch beneath imperious lords,
'With necks submissive; but to search afar
'Some distant land, where freedom dwells, secure
'From each assault. Of his own purpose, last
'He spoke; a purpose built on thought mature,
'Nor to be sway'd by aught; with us to pass
'His days in quiet. Know, (Androgeus closed;
'Cool, yet resolved, his speech.) *If, as they will
'Ye leave yon nation, as ye found them; free

'With me, to seek some solitary shore
'In peace; we yield with uncomplaining voice,
'To you, this fairer region, as your own:
'Possess these fields uninjured. But if rage
'Or keen revenge, or hate possess your hearts,
'And urge to desperate deeds; I stand to guard
'These from oppression. With yon host I lift
'This arm, prepared to conquer or to fall.'
'He said.—The giant warriours stood amazed,
'At first in deep suspense: but tumult, soon
'Had risen, and ire inflamed the madding throng;
'But that Romerus, whose great soul disdains,
'Though yet untamed, and barbarous; to oppress
'The brave in freedom's cause, approved the deed;
'And, while he deem'd our leader's fix'd resolve,
'Mean, and unworthy his superiour kind;
'Yet to his choice he left him, and opposed
'Gerontes, and his mates abhorred, who else
'Had tried by force to break us, and enslave.
'Few words comprise the rest. We left the land
'Where these maintain'd their empire, and explored
'Beneath our guide, a region far removed;
'And wandering o'er the solitary vales,
'In ease and quiet pass'd our happy days,
'Tending our flocks. Yet not unskill'd in war,
'We tried mock battles oft, and taught our sons
'To shake the javelin, and to wield the spear.

'THUS while the years roll'd on, a Herald bore
'News, of a stranger host that stood in mail
'Darkening the shores in myriads. To relieve
'His former friends, now humbled as they seem'd,
'Androgeus held his course, with those, in haste
'Assembled round, and gave command, that all
'With speed should follow to the field.—Ye know
'What war ensued, battle on battle heap'd,
'Yet undecisive; though we rue the cause
'That hither brought us from our peaceful land:
'Such mighty deeds one glorious hand atchieved!
'For else your host, as ours, had sunk, oppress'd
'Beneath superiour force. For what remains,
'Behold your captive, Chiefs; and leave him free,
'Or as your prisoner guard, as best beseems
'Your state. Yet know, one ardent wish informs
'Our hearts; one just desire to see in peace
'Contending nations met; and as their foes,
'Yon impious tyrant, and his crew, expell'd
'From this fair region; else a scene of blood,
'Of dire contention, and unceasing war.'

HE ceased.—The Trojan leaders, to a tale
So new, gave still attention. Nought appear'd
Of feign'd, or doubtful in th' events; nor aught
That might create suspicion justly placed,
Of some insidious purpose. Candour beam'd,
And truth, benignant in the stranger's eye:

He spoke with inborn freedom, what his heart
Conceived; nor seem'd a captive, but a friend.
Hence, on his words the pair with pleasure dwelt,
And gave applause. Eugenius weigh'd the whole
In anxious thought; and eager to explore
What Gods a nation own'd, so justly prized;
What rites they practised, and what laws observed;
Facts, on whose stable basis, he might build
A lasting union: on the captive Prince
He bent a placid look, and thus replied:

'NOT without wonder, Warriour, we have heard
'Thy tale, by simple nature as it seems,
'And truth inform'd. Yet judge not that a vain,
'And rash desire of novelty, impells
'What we request. Yet of the night, a part
'Remains. Inform us what the Gods ye serve,
'The rites ye practise, and th' inferiour powers
'Ye hold in reverence. For it much imports
'Your friends, ere join'd in mutual league, to learn
'Your rules, your manners, and whate'er befits
'Our state, that nought may break the sacred bond.'

THUS he: and prompt at once to make reply,
The stranger now confiding.—'What ye ask
'Is just. He smiling spoke; Of sacred rites,
'To me whate'er is known, for mystery
'Involves the highest; hear my voice declare.

'KNOW, mighty leaders, then, that we, removed

'In this lone region, from th' abodes of men,
'Own but ONE POWER SUPREME; and in our groves
'Adore great ESUS. To the GOD, we deem
'One sacred tree devoted; and beneath
'The OAK's broad boughs assembling, bid the voice
'Of music, from the lute's melodious strings,
'Ascend to heaven.—A priest of spotless mind,
'By Nature's Lord distinguish'd, and apprised
'Of counsels to a chosen few reveal'd,
'Tells, from the consecrated round, his will
'To all th' attending tribes. Th' inferiour train,
'Each honour'd with the oak's unfolding flower,
'The MISLETOE revered; raise their glad voice
'In hymns divine, to Nature's sovereign Lord;
'And slay the *milk-white heifer*, at the shrine,
'While heav'n accepts the sacrifice: nor these
'Alone, direct the mystic rites, or speak
'The will of ESUS. Near the altar, stand
'A virgin band, pure even in thought, from ill;
'Who, in the victim's reeking entrails, mark
'The fate of battles, and the warriour's doom.
'Rear'd in the hallow'd grove, they pass their days
'In peaceful calm; nor, but when wrath divine
'Impends, or peril seems at hand; appear
'To utter heaven-inspired, their Lord's command,
'Or give the future breath.—'Twere vain to tell
'Of what we boast, in science, or in arts

'To have discover'd: of the lunar orb,
'With her bleak mountains, continents, and seas,
'Brought full in sight by our enlighten'd seers,
'And known to them alone: of future worlds
'Unveil'd, and scenes that open on the mind
'Released from matter, by the welcome hand
'Of fate: of chastisement, or due reward
'That wait impartial in a life to come
'On bold impiety, or virtuous deeds,
'Delay'd, not cancell'd: on those themes, the time
'Forbids enlargement. Yet 'tis meet to know,
'That, as his first command, our heaven-taught Chief
'Enjoins to follow, even when perils press,
'The right unbiass'd; and to shun the wrong.
'Hence, in our martial bands, though now they seem
'In hostile guise assembled, ye behold
'The friends of truth, and virtue; not averse,
'Should your prevailing voice assail with power,
'And gain Androgeus, in his secret heart,
'Perhaps inclined to bend a haughty race,
'Though not as weeds that choke the springing flowers,
'To rase them from the soil: to join your host
'In every noble purpose that inspires
'Your thoughts, and animates your labouring hands.'

THUS while the stranger spoke, th' Athenian Chief
Revolved his words, a moment unresolved,
Whether, with Sparta's leader, to dispatch

The captive Prince to Brutus; or dismiss
That hour, with honour to his own, with words
Of grateful import. Pondering long; at last
He fix'd his purpose, and benign, began:

'I DEEM, ye Princes of the Trojan host,
'This Chief our friend, not prisoner.—Be it ours
'Hence to dismiss the warriour, to his own,
'Even on the instant, free. In us, he sees
'The host of Brutus; in our voices, hears
'The general wish, to hold with Albion's sons
'One common interest; and with these, unite
'Against Gerontes, and his dire compeers.
'Hence, let him speak a message, as from all,
'In his great leader's ear; nor to yon camp
'Perhaps with peril journeying, waste the hours
'In talk, when mighty deeds may be essay'd.'

THUS he. His brave companions gave at once
Assent, and Sparta's Chief returning, bore
A tale to chear the monarch's anxious heart,
With words of glad import, and hope of league
With Albion's warlike sons.—It now remain'd,
To bind, as prudence gave command, their guest
Close in his heart, to lock from all conceal'd,
What, of the band within the wood disposed,
He might divine. Albanus gave in few
This charge. 'In yonder host,' 'twas thus he spoke,
'Thou seest a multitude, from various climes,

'And distant lands assembled; all by heaven
'Enjoin'd, in western regions to explore
'A seat of sovereignty. Hither we sail'd,
'Twas God convey'd us; nor had met in arms
'Yon barbarous tribe, but that by fraud they strove,
'And force alternate, on ourselves to wreak
'Rage unprovoked; and rouse the sleeping powers
'Of discord. Here, we hold no fix'd abode
'In these deep shades; but as occasion calls,
'Diverge from place to place, maintaining still
'One aim unceasing, to annoy the host
'Of fierce Gerontes, and by force, expel
'Its giant inmates from this hapless land:
'Nor, but in just defence, will we oppose
'Its native sons; but leagued with them, control
'What foes obstruct our conquest, till we rear
'One common empire, o'er the world rever'd.'

Not less, with grateful heart Trigontes heard
The generous leader's words, than felt with joy
Th' effect. He stood, with one consent, released,
And as the happy denizens of air,
Free to select his place.—'I go,' he cried,
'To Albion's lords, the Herald of a race
'Divine; alike in perilous fight renown'd,
'And skill'd in nobler arts; arts, that improve,
'And dignify the kind.—Princes, adieu!
'Already on the ruddy orient, flame

'The signs of morn. Ere yet I reach the camp,
'Perhaps the meeting hosts may mix in war;
'Nor space remain for parley: but when night
'Shall part the hostile nations, and our Chiefs
'Convene in peace; then shall my voice declare
'Your honourable deeds, and what your cause
'Of fierce contention with the giant train.
'Meantime, whate'er th' effect, no word unweigh'd
'Shall pass these lips unheedful, and expose
To peril those, my best, my generous friends.'

He said: then parting, measured back his way
In heart rejoicing, to his own; with hope
Of mediating peace.—The Spartan King,
His task perform'd, though yet his ear received
Nought of Locrinus; held in haste his course
To Brutus' camp; for now the waking lark
Eyed from his mossy bed, th' expanse of air,
And flutter'd his loose wings; with tidings fraught
Of various import, yet of peaceful kind.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK XV.—

THE ARGUMENT.

The host of BRUTUS having engaged in battle, dismayed by the absence of LOCRINUS, are compelled to retire upon all sides, notwithstanding the efforts of BRUTUS, and CAMBER in their behalf. ANDROGEUS alone, is unwilling to take the advantage of this situation.—While yet in suspence, he is met by BRUTUS, who finding him more composed than he expected, explains to him the occasion of the war; and the injuries that had excited his resentment. The ALBIAN Leader having heard him with patience, and apparent approbation, is about to reply; when SATAN, having involved the field in universal darkness, exhorts him to proceed; and tells him, as a sign that Superiour Beings were interested in his cause, that he would see BRUTUS thrown to the ground without human interference.—ANDROGEUS is again staggered by seeing this promise accomplished, as soon as the light is restored. ROMERUS, in the mean time, having been victorious in the right wing, the infernal Monarch takes this opportunity to bring forth the Fiend DESPAIR; whose appearance occasions instant and universal rout among the followers of BRUTUS. At the instant when he gives up all as lost, the Guardian of the Island, now permitted to interpose, compells the flying bands to return; while ALBANUS and EUGENIUS rushing from their ambush, assail the Giants behind. The Guardian Power seizes the Fiend, and striking the earth that opens, precipitates her to Hell. Night coming on, BRUTUS makes an orderly retreat with the host, now somewhat reassured. He is himself the last person, who after having repelled the enemy, enters into the camp.

AGAIN, with morn the warring nations stood
Prepared for fight; but dread, till now unknown,
Depress'd the Trojan bands, and dire presage

Of what might next ensue. They heard no more
Locrinus' voice; nor in recoiling hosts,
Beheld the triumph of his hand: they felt
No breath divine, inspiring as they moved,
Each heart with martial ardour, and the hope,
Th' enlivening hope, of conquest. Slow they trode,
Though form'd beneath their glorious Chiefs to war,
In solemn silence. Brutus undismay'd,
And in himself secure, now raised to heaven
His supplicating eyes; and calmly now,
Revolving in his thought, what late *the Bard*
Reveal'd of ill impending, yet of hope
In heaven's all-ruling Lord, who hither brought
Their fleet from perils of the roaring main,
And adverse powers; stood in His care, secure
And fix'd, in stedfast thought o'erlook'd the field.
Nor ceased the *stranger*, ever at his side,
To chear the monarch's heart, that else depress'd
Had shared the general damp, and rouse his soul
To deeds by heaven approved, and great emprise.
MEANTIME, fierce Camber, at his sire's command,
Left in the camp his cohort, to repel
The foes assault, all ranged beneath thy rule,
Cleantes, famed in arms; and took his place
Before the Dardan host, where late a Prince,
Scarce more renown'd, had led the conquering band.
Stern as he trode, and terrible, he seem'd

To match Romerus' strength, and lowering, bore
On his dark front, defiance. His compeers
All ranged as wont before each hardy tribe,
March'd to the fight intrepid; these, to meet
Androgeus with his powers, yet uninform'd
Of what Trigontes might relate; and those,
Against the giants' mightier race combined;
Who now horrific rose, and rush'd to war.

BEFORE the savage warriours, and the sons,
The nobler sons of Albion, came the fiends
Of hell, exulting as they saw their foes,
Heaven's splendent offspring, by their Lord with-held
From daring enterprise; afar convened
On air, as tame spectators of a scene,
So late ennobled by their acts divine.

AS, from the hearth, when some destructive spark
On loose materials lights, prepared to mount
In flame; the kindling fuel, in its course
Involves the towering edifice, and o'er
The walls high rising, gathers as it spreads,
New force, and swelling, in one general blaze
O'erspreads the crackling roof: such, while they view'd,
Robb'd of their mightiest Chief, the Trojan powers
Advancing slow and silent; was the rage,
Still gathering force ere yet it burst in deeds,
That fired the giants hearts, and braced their frames.

ANDROGEUS first in place advanced, inspired

With thought of great revenge, and met in fight
Thy troops, Adrastus, wedged in firm array;
A chosen phalanx. Watchful of his foe,
Adrastus pausing, scann'd him coolly o'er,
And pondering, trusted in defence alone,
Receding slowly from an arm unmatch'd,
Stunn'd at his giant stature; while the Chief
Of Albion, threat'ned in his course, a whole
With ruin; and assailing, had o'erpower'd
Their strength, but that portended spears opposed
The shock, where'er he moved; compacted shields,
On shields high-raised; a brazen mound, sustain'd
His utmost efforts, and repell'd his hand.
As some attentive shepherd tends his flock
With care, what time by night, assembling wolves
Hang on their skirts, to catch the straggling few
That wander from the herd; or wait, to rush
At some unguarded opening on the throng:
He, with unceasing care o'erlooks their track,
And, with a train, the hardiest, and the best,
All moving with projecting fronts, supports
Each fierce attack, and holds them from their prey,
Though urged by madding appetite: Thy Prince,
Lyrnessus, thus, unable to withstand
With his own might Androgeus; chose a troop
To ward each onset of his Albian foe.
These, when Androgeus' force essay'd to crush

The Larnyssean, stood opposed, and screen'd
Their leader, in each strong assault secure.
THUS fenced, Adrastus traversed all the field
With stedfast eye, and to the yielding, sent
In haste th' expected aid; o'ermatch'd in fight,
Each Albian ruler of inferiour name,
Who tried his prowess; and by wisdom taught,
Alone declined to meet a mightier arm,
Yet ever mindful of his host, still kept
That dreadful hand in action; and forbade
To spread confusion, terrour, and dismay.
SUCH was the scene, when Azrael, as he held
Each host in sight, exulting in the hope
Of steady conquest, now resolved to wreak
His hate, on all that own'd Adrastus' sway,
The first.—Hence, summoning his mates around:
'Lo! Heaven deserts the field, ('twas thus he spoke;)
'Whether with hidden purpose, to call forth
'Our powers, and bring to yonder trembling bands
'Aid in the last resort:—or that her sons,
'A minstrel choir, ordain'd for dance, and song,
'Shrink, as I trust, from spirits in battle tried,
'Avails not. Seize we, while it lasts, the time
'That wakes glad hope; and while our Prince surveys
'Our acts, not unobservant, though conceal'd
'From sight; with terrour strike yon hardy race,
'And through their ranks, compacted as they seem,

'By Albion's guiding Chief, let in the day.'
He said; and now the fiends had borne amain
All force before them; but th' Omnipotent
Forbade the meditated aim, and thrice,
Fierce as the crew advanced, by pale affright,
And inborn awe repell'd them; hence they spread
Scatter'd, and loose, along the giant tribes
And Albian numbers; ever bent on ill,
Chearing the host, that shouting as they came,
Burst as a torrent o'er its bank.—The Prince,
O'ermatch'd already, held his place no more;
But while he eyed Androgeus, and beheld
His own, like stubble scatter'd on the wing
Of some rough whirlwind, all dispersed at once,
As in the instant, terrour-struck, amazed,
(Thus far th' infernals, else from deeds with-held,
Enjoy'd a welcome scene;) turn'd from the fight
Deep-sighing from his heart, and to the wind
Gave hope. Pisander, o'er th' Athenians raised,
What time he saw the rout, in vain essay'd
By some strong effort to restore the fight.
Press'd by great Segonax, the warriour's breast
Knew dread: he saw Adrastus' fate, and shared
In his disaster, with the great in arms
Now first abash'd; yet fled not, but retired
Before thy leaders, Albion, with the fiends
That onward urged, a loud exulting throng.

As o'er Dambéa's mountains, when the clouds
Of heaven, in rushing cataracts descend
On Ethiopian vales; when Guba hears
The roar, and Nile's proud genius stands aghast,
Lest some impending fragment, down the rocks
Of Arywagua, hurl'd precipitate
An height immense, should choak the springs that swell
His infant current in its route:—such noise
Announced thy course, Androgeus, o'er the field
With slaughter heap'd; while even the guardian power
Of Albion, trembling as he moved, implored
To save her favour'd sons, the Mind Supreme.

Say, Queen sublime, what numbers sunk beneath
Androgeus' prowess; and what cause with-held
His hand from conquest, in the mid-career,
Ere final rout o'erwhelm'd the flying foe?
Hydaspes first, a noble warriour, sent
The lance with fury wing'd, to reach a heart
Endow'd with giant might, and fenced behind
A brazen rampart; but the forceful spear
Far distant, trembled in the soil, unstain'd,
And guiltless of an wound. He saw at once
His fate impending, and essay'd to shun,
Behind the covert of Adrastus' shield,
The leader roused to anger; but his hope
Was vain. Even he, though god-like, fear'd to meet
A giant arm; and back-retreating, left

His friend, with forfeit life to pay the price
Of blind temerity; the trenchant spear,
From his broad shoulders struck the gory ball
That roll'd on earth:—the spirit pass'd in air.
PHILENOR shared his fate; and in the vale
Of Tempe rear'd, Lycestes; one beloved
Of Mars, as poets feign'd, and one of race
Divine; thy son, Laodice, a nymph
Who graced Diana's train. Her on the bank
Of silver Peneus, sunk in sleep, a swain
O'erpower'd; and from th' embrace Lycestes came,
(Such was the fabled tale of ancient song:)
Skill'd in the chase, or battle, to direct
The dart, or spear unerring to its aim.
Raised by Androgeus' arm, and swung on air,
With quivering feet, then dash'd with headlong force,
Amid his trembling mates; (for anger ruled
That hour the foe;) death, instant death, relieved
The soul, amid the gushing blood, discharged
To scenes by mortal men yet unexplored.
THIS pass'd, while yet the Lyrnesseans bore
The fight with dauntless hearts: but when they fled
With headlong speed, and trembling, sought the camp;
Then Hyperanthes, Lycon, Phormius, fell
Beneath his arm. Callistratus lay pale
On earth; a chief from famed Telmessus sent
To join the Trojan host, and known in fight

By many a noble deed. Orontes sunk
With these in dust, and slept, to wake no more.

And now had ruin whelm'd the Trojan race,
Dire and remediless; but that the Lord
Of heaven, who meant to try them, yet forbade
Their foes to triumph in their fall. By Him
With-held, Androgeus paused, amid the scene
That spread around him, and the blood that mark'd
His track. He wish'd to humble, not o'erturn
The Trojan race, and sweep them from the land.
Still, in his inmost heart, he held unchanged
A secret purpose; with the stranger powers,
When proved, to join in mutual league his own.
But doubtful yet he stood, while unapprised
Of all he wish'd to learn; and while his troops
Pursued their foes dispersing, thus apart,
Disclosed unheard, the counsel of his mind.

'Yon host, so late exulting and elate,
'Now find in flight their refuge. If we scale
'Their mounds, we end at once the dubious war.
'All then repairing to their vales, with joy,
'Again may sink in silence, and repose
'Amidst the lap of plenty; and in peace,
'Pass all their future days.—But, whence this hope
'Of peaceful years?—Unceasing fight, perhaps,
'Or dire alarms await us, from the friends
'We aid. Enough these strangers feel our arms,

'Our *present foes; at last,* in hope, with us allied.
'Here let the slaughter cease.'—He said, and call'd
His subject nation from their work. They heard,
And turn'd unwilling back; while all, opposed
To Albion's sons, now flying, sought the camp
O'erthrown, and shrinking in th' unequal war.
Not unobserved of Brutus was the rout,
Nor cries unheard, announcing deep distress.
But growing ills that gather'd close around,
Held his great soul suspended, and his hand
From instant deeds; Gerontes in his course,
And stern Romerus, bore such matchless sway.
Not, from the bank of frozen Tanais,
Thy bear, Siberia, growling horrid joy,
Darts in the rage of hunger, on his prey
With keener appetite, than on his foes,
The giant monarch. But he met repulse
At first, and foul defeat. The Trojans ranged
In closing lines, repell'd him, and defied.
High in the van their glorious leader blazed,
Not less, than fancy paints Apollo arm'd,
And pouring light around.—His thoughtful eye
Scann'd the long field; and acts proclaim'd his power.
An youth there was, Almedon was his name,
Gerontes' kinsman; at his side who fought
With rival prowess, nor in shape unlike
The giant sovereign; nor in zeal to spread

The rage of slaughter far. He whirl'd his mace
Of oak, though slighter than the ponderous mass,
Wielded by abler arms around; and bore,
Even in the weak spring of unripened age,
Semblance of mighty deeds. In heart, he match'd
The fiercest Chieftain:—not Gerontes knew
Hate deeper fix'd, or more untamed desire.
STRUCK, as he saw the monarch, still averse
To meet his rival's onset, and a spear,
By none encounter'd of the boastful crew,
Amid the pile of rocks, and solid ore,
Rude magazines of death; he raised a stone
Of weight immense; and trembling, as he poised
The rock, with eyes intensely fix'd, beheld
The Trojan Prince, and watch'd him as he moved.
JUST when he turn'd, and in his front display'd
The shield's broad orb, behind him, close advanced
The youth; and marking every gesture, hurl'd
The mass, with face averted, on his frame.
FULL on his shoulder, while he tower'd in fight,
The thundering fragment broke. Even from an arm
So young, he felt the shock with broken step
Urged on, and wrapt in dizzy mist. High hope
Sprung in Almedon's breast. 'Twas Belial urged,
To this bold deed, an else unequal hand.
In sight he stood, and rear'd a broken rock
Aloft, with shouts exulting. Unsubdued

Alike by ire, as by the pride, that else
Had still'd revenge; great Brutus sought to guard
His life; and in defence, not rage, impell'd,
Prone as the youth with headlong fury rush'd,
The brazen buckler on his front. He fell;
And from his mouth discharged a purple stream:
Nor, prostrate thus, his stunn'd compeers essay'd
To shield their mate. All but Gerontes shrunk.
Heaven quell'd their rage, as from an arm divine.
As roars the Ganges, when collected streams
With torrents swell the tide, that rushes on
Rapid and deep, along the sultry plains
Of India, hid beneath the whelming wave;
Thus raged Gerontes. Deeming that the foe,
Fierce as himself, would strike his kinsman's heart;
The furious monarch from his thought expell'd
All dread. He stood to Brutus' arm opposed,
Rough, blood-stain'd, horrible; and in his grasp
Essay'd to lock him, desperate in his ire.
The leader shrunk aside, yet shrinking, mark'd
Th' extended arm, and bared it of the fur
That cased his frame around. Again he raised
A stroke with meditated aim; and now
Had stretch'd Gerontes breathless on the field,
And finish'd half the war:—but ere it fell,
Callantes, Mastor, and Argeus closed
Around him sudden, and afar convey'd

The giant, groaning with revenge, and rage.
And now, th' imperial Chief beheld on earth
The fallen Almedon, and with pitying voice
Thus spoke benign:—'I give thee life; depart
'Reprieved, and learn, if e'er one gentler thought
'Should tame thy savage heart, to spare the weak,
'And grant the boon that glads thee when received.'
THUS he; and now had turn'd to headlong flight
Even yet, unaided by celestial friends,
The barbarous rout; but as he scann'd the field,
With cool considerate eye, amid the host,
He mark'd the havock of Romerus' hand.
THEIR great defender lost, the Trojan bands
Recoil'd: Megistheus with Arimon join'd,
A while repell'd the giant:—but he broke
Their force, though great, and scatter'd fate around.
MEANTIME, the tumult on the left was heard
Remote; and tidings of Androgeus' deeds
Came to the sovereign's ear.—He deem'd at first,
To call Eugenius, and his warlike mate
Young Alban, from the woodland; where they watch'd
The various turns of battle, and ere now
Had rush'd unbidden from their place, to stay
Androgeus' course; but that they saw him pause
Even in his mid career:—but first he wish'd
To mark what face the distant battle bore;
And judge from sight, of what the time required

Of counsel, or of fight. Hence, through the bands,
In quest of Camber, roll'd his eye. He found
The dauntless Chief, by Vortiger enthrall'd
In snares:—for deeming when withdrawing slow,
His feign'd retreat a flight; he rush'd with shouts,
To seize him, stumbling, as he thought, and maim'd:
When scoffs were heard, and tauntings, that inflamed
The hero's heart to madness. Long he tried
In vain, to reach the boaster with his spear,
Or ready javelin; from the mark diverged,
Or by his adversary's wiles, or fiend
That turn'd the weapons; deep in earth they sunk
Harmless.—At last his better genius wing'd
His flying lance, that pierced the Chieftain's thigh,
And drank the spouting blood. At once he groan'd
With shame and anguish. His surrounding mates,
For much they prized his counsel in the hour
Of peril, bore him staggering from the field.

JUST then, bold Camber, wheeling, heard the voice
Of his great sire, and instant, took his place
In arms, beside him. Brutus to his charge
Consign'd the legions.—'Thou maintain with these
'The post already gain'd, (in haste he spoke:)
'While I explore from yonder height, the war
'In other parts, here less exposed to view.'

THIS heard; the Prince exulting in his charge,
Strode to the front.—The Chief in silence pass'd

With few, but chosen followers, to the left.
Still, at his side, Lycaon bore aloft
Th' imperial ensign waving; till they came
Where now Androgeus stay'd with Albion's host,
Victorious, yet unwilling to pursue
The flying, or assail the camp in view.
As, o'er Dofrine's black mountains, hangs in air
The royal eagle, unresolved to tear,
By force, his offspring, from the ravenous brood
That close around him, or collect in haste
To fight his kingly mates, or drive the flock
With rooted beak, and talons that inflict
Deep wounds, along the pathless waste of snow,
To caverns deeply hid;—great Brutus thus,
Slow as he mark'd with anxious thought the field,
Stood unresolved. He saw, or seem'd to see
His glory withering: his presageful mind
Just view'd, but dwelt not on his matchless son,
So late the terrour of his foes, but now
Perhaps low-laid.—A sigh the father heaved,
And, deeming that the perilous time required
Deeds on the instant, gave command to bear
The standard backwards, as the sign to warn
Their ambush'd band of danger, and dismay.
MEANTIME, the monarch with his tribe select
Moved on resolved; and call'd his flying host
Back from the camp, where Lesbia's prudent Chief

Denied them entrance. First th' Athenians heard,
They turn'd, they faced Androgeus, and assumed
A calmer aspect; while Adrastus urged
By praise, by threats, Lyrnessus' warriours join'd,
To gain new courage, and with dauntless hearts
Beneath their sovereign's eye repulse the foe.

THUS stood the fight.—Th' infernal throng enraged,
Beheld Androgeus, ceasing in his course
To certain conquest. Azrael tried his arts
In vain. The sons of Albion, though impell'd
By every fiend to cruel deeds, retain'd
Their firm allegiance; and their leader held
His purpose fix'd to humble, not destroy,
The stranger race. Hence, not unpleased, he saw
Their king no more victorious, as when last
They parted, now approaching. Front to front,
They met. The battle ceased. Each moved before
His bands. In aspect each, though one in size
And height surpass'd, appear'd for mighty deeds
Design'd. Great Brutus, eyeing, as he spoke,
The adverse Prince, as one he wish'd a friend,
Yet shunn'd not as a foe, declined his spear;
And thus serene, with temperate act, began:

'CHIEF of a mighty host, in battle tried,
'And own'd of prowess; know, of all thy kind,
'Fierce as they seem, and barbarous, 'tis with thee
'Alone I wish to parley, and confirm

'Perhaps alliance: for a post that speaks
'Of honour, claims and holds my first regard.
'THE din of arms, when first we met, forbade
'Calm intercourse; forbade the cause of war,
'(Heaven's scourge, when roused by human guilt, to ire;)
'To stand confess'd before thee.—Hear in few,
'What raised the first commotion; whence we come,
'And on what errand; and when heard, decide
'As best beseems, of what my voice declares.'
HE paused. Androgeus, leaning on his spear,
In silence listen'd. Strong desire to learn
Facts yet obscured, and expectation, held
Attention fix'd, when Brutus thus resumed:
'WE come, a race of strangers, from a land
'Remote, and hither, as th' Eternal will'd,
'Have bent our course with peril; and obtain'd
'Not without toil, and many a vain essay,
'At last our promised harbour.—Glad of heart,
'We touch'd the shore of Albion, and conceived
'Our labour finish'd, when new storms arose;
'Foes unprovoked assail'd us, treacherous foes,
'Like thee, in might and stature, but in mind,
'Afar disjoin'd. These, without cause, essay'd
'To seize by fraud our leaders; and when we,
'In arms opposed them, yet on peaceful schemes
'Intent; of all unmindful, but to gorge
'Their horrid hearts with blood, pour'd from the wood

'Like famish'd wolves, all madding for their prey.
'E'er since, compell'd to meet them on the field,
'We fought: and, but that your superiour powers
'Have lent them aid, had levell'd with the dust
'Their boastful arrogance.—Know, Chief, with you,
'And your great host, in semblance as our own,
'I wish to meet in union, and pursue
'A common interest. As a friend, I urge
'This hope:—we dread not hostile nations, join'd
'In league, to stand in war opposed.—I tell
'Sincere my purpose. Now declare thine own.'

THUS, while his rival spoke, Androgeus seem'd
To sight, as one suspended; but at heart
Rejoiced.—With Brutus, and his peers, he hoped
To form alliance; and beheld the time,
Not without secret pleasure, that announced
His purpose nearly gain'd.—But while his eye
Just beam'd assent, unfashion'd yet in words,
A change unhoped appall'd them, and dismay'd.

FOR lo! the monarch of the shades beneath,
Till now conceal'd, at last beheld the hour
Of triumph hastening onwards, fraught with joy
To his well-labouring mates, and by himself
Long-wish'd!—He saw the heavenly train with-held
From mixing in the fight; though what the cause
That stay'd their arms, he sought not, nor divined.
Not yet disclosed in his own shape, the fiend

Observant mark'd the warriours, and beheld
Alarm'd, Androgeus now to peace inclined.
As when some wealthy caravan o'erspreads
The Nubian waste; and cautious in its march,
Holds on its journey to the land of Nile,
Through many a pathless region, and the troop
Of pilgrims, deem the place of rest at hand;
When Cairo's glittering spires, in fancy's eye,
Already tremble on the parting cloud,
That floats in sight, a distant shout is heard;
And lo! the fierce Arabian pours behind,
In thunder rushing to his prey!—The Prince
Of hell, thus, seizing now th' occasion, cast
Black clouds around him; and in triumph rose
High on the void aerial, to confound
The hope of Brutus, and his rising joy.
FULL on the Trojan bands, a tempest rush'd
With imitated lightning, and the bolt
Of heaven's Omnipotent; (th' Eternal gave
That hour permission;) o'er the host it spread
From right to left; involving, in its course,
The whole collected legions. Each dire fiend
Then plied his task, and struck to every heart
Dread yet unfelt; but in their foes, awaked
Glad thoughts, and joy of conquest near in view.
ALONE, the God-like leader, undismay'd,
Stood fix'd as Pelion, when the tempest sweeps

His sides, immoveable. His mind retain'd
Its powers, in adverse, as in prosperous change,
Alike serene. Even in the depth of night,
He raised aloft his supplicating eyes;
In Jove's high word confiding, though he saw
Labour on labour heap'd, and toil on toil,
To hold him from the goal.—Th' Omniscient knew
His heart, but kept his secret purpose veil'd,
And still unyielding, gave his foes the day.

THE monarch of the pit, while yet he cast
Night, and black tempest round him, thus unheard,
But by Androgeus, roused the Chief to war.

'GO, favour'd of the Gods, assail yon throng;
'Superiour Natures aid thee, and forbid
'To join with these in league. Mark! when my hand
'Restores the day, their mightiest.—Should he stand
'Untouch'd, confide not in my offer'd aid.
'But should he sink on earth, then know the sign.'

THUS spoke the *Prince of Air*, and bade the clouds
Disperse. The darkness heard him, and dispell'd.
While yet the sun emerged, a rushing blast,
A whirlwind, rapid as the light, and strong
As that which bears the forest on its wing;
Borne, and impell'd by more than mortal force,
Burst on the Trojan sudden, and upbore,
Then cast him prone to earth.—Androgeus saw
The sign fulfill'd, and own'd an hand divine.

Nor less the giant tribes, to fury roused
By hell's dread king, impetuous, scour'd the field.
As when, beheld from Bacar's sunny vale,
The dire tornado, sweeping o'er the tide
Of Indus, heaves it swelling from its base,
What time the barks, with eastern treasure stored,
Float on the stream secure, at once they feel
The shock; at once, in fragments heap the bank
On either side: the Trojans disarranged,
Scatter'd, and broken thus, before their foes
Fled diverse: darkness, and avenging fiends
O'erspread their course, and bellow'd in their rear.

Thy soul, intrepid Camber, in the rout
Alone was steady: ever bent, in deeds
To emulate Locrinus, he sustain'd
Th' assault of Vortiger; restored to fight,
And eager for revenge, repell'd the rage
Even of Gerontes madding; and opposed,
Leagued with Megistheus, and the Spartan king,
A brazen barrier to Romerus' power.

Not then, brave Prince, to aid thy loved compeers,
Thy heart or hand were wanting, though thou stood'st
Within thyself collected, and upheld
By no superiour mind:—thy forceful spear,
Beside Romerus, laid a mighty Chief
In dust, Rogvaldus, boastful as he came,
In his strong arm confiding, and the mass

Of solid rock he raised, and swung on high.
Full on his spreading chest the spear descends,
And quivers in his heart:—supine he drops
On earth; the spirit instant glides in air.
YET smarting, with a loss so lately felt,
When now the giant saw his mate o'erthrown,
And stretch'd in dust before him, rage o'erpower'd
All calmer thought; he call'd the vengeful crew,
At once, around him. In their front, appear'd
Gerontes, as himself, alone intent
On fell revenge, though keener in his rage,
And less by reason sway'd: Romerus eyed,
And thus to vengeance roused the madding throng.
'YE Chiefs, be firm! yon death-devoted host
'Wait but to fall like victims at the shrine:
'Even their own Gods forsake them. Be your hearts
'As mine resolved, nor meet yon mound of shields,
'With dread: Our hands shall break the brazen wall.
'Strength, stature, prowess, are your own; exert
'Your powers in fight; nor let the shout that drives
'The hungry boar unsated, from his prey,
'Be heard by pigmies unappall'd: approve
'Your sire, imperial Neptune, and attend
'The voice of blood that cries, Avenge!—avenge!'
THIS said, he stirr'd to fury every heart.
All, with a roar that shook the solid rocks,
Rush'd onwards. Camber, with his friends, opposed

To headlong rage, arrangement; and to arms
In wrath, or haste, upborne, portended spears,
The shield, the dart, the javelin:—what in strength
Was wanting, discipline and care supplied;
Nor aught had broke the phalanx, but a hand
Unmatch'd, as thine, Romerus, in the field.

On Sparta's king, the giant first essay'd
To bend his force: a rock he raised on high,
Enormous mass, that quivering in his grasp
Aloft, in horrour and amazement held
Each wild eye fix'd beneath. Descending prone,
It miss'd the Spartan Prince, but in its course,
Swept at his side young Philoctetes, prone
To earth; then as it plough'd the ranks of war,
The parting numbers gave it way. 'Twas then,
That hell's dread monarch wrapt the warring hosts
In preternatural night; and when the day
Broke forth, prepared his last decisive blow.
For now exulting, as a toil-worn crew
That mark the shores in sight, he deem'd his work
Now near its close; and rising on the void
Of air, held onward to the cavern drear
His flight, where lay the hell-born Pest, secured
With bars of adamant. Deep in the den
She sunk, close-lock'd, yet there, such fiery rays,
Such living sparkles shot, and shriek'd so wild,
Still as she turn'd, that even the savage race,

The shagged people of the waste, forsook
Their haunt; and howling, left th' unfinish'd prey.

WITH his great purpose swell'd, th' infernal king
Sail'd through the gulph. He burst the chains that held
The shape inthrall'd; and in her double screen,
Undaunted, bore her to the light!—He seem'd,
While yet beheld afar, a cloud impregn'd
With storms, that by the labouring winds impell'd,
O'erspreads the Northern hills, and slowly wraps
In night, the void horizon:—but, at hand,
Prone from his dark retreat the fiend descends;
And now alighting, where the Trojan bands
Stood pale and disarranged, in act to fly,
Full in the midst he placed his dire compeer,
As yet unknown; and waving, ere he show'd
Her form, his wings to bear him from the scene,
Removed th' exteriour fence; and left the shape
To spread foul rout, and terrour all around.

THOUGH shrouded half from sight, th' infernal, new
To day, within her covert, felt the beam
Of heaven's bright orb, and heaving, raised her eyes,
Then first from night expanding, to the ray
That thrill'd her shivering frame. Backward she shrunk,
Of light abhorrent, while from every nerve
Starting, and tremulous, the darts of hell
Though yet th' interiour fence untouch'd remain'd,
Innumerous flew, and scatter'd o'er the host

Pangs till that hour unfelt:—not on the head
Of him, who sails beneath the burning line,
The penetrating ray that to the brain
Shoots instant death, with surer aim pervades
The seat of life, than from her blasting eyes
The flames that lighten'd, scatter'd plagues and woe.
PALE, trembling, horrour-struck, the host around
All wither'd as they gazed. But, when again
She rear'd her eye-lids, yelling, as she felt
Heaven's genial beam;—the blood-congealing sounds
Quench'd the last rays of hope: they shriek'd, they fled
Where terrour drove them, headlong; every care
Of leader, conquest, friend and sire, forgot:
Th' exulting foes behind them, shouting loud
As conquerors now; and in their rear, the fiend.
BUT, mindful of the Prince, Azzazel cast
A veil around him, with his peers; and kept
From these the shape conceal'd. He mark'd alone,
An universal rout: nor knew what cause
Impell'd the wide-dispersing host, to fly.
MEANWHILE, the Guardian of the land, forbid
By heaven to grant them aid, with grief beheld
Their flight, and triumph of th' infernal crew.
While yet she look'd with supplicating eyes,
To Him who rules supreme; light on her mind
Even in the instant darting, show'd his will
Fulfill'd, and charge now given to check the foe.

FORTHWITH, descending from the mid-way air,
She mark'd the Lycian Prince, but late so great
In arms, now mixing with the rest, in flight
Inglorious. In his manly breast, she breathed
A spirit till now unfelt. On Camber next,
Seized with the general panic, her keen eye
She turn'd indignant.—'Fly, unworthy Prince!'
She cried: 'but vaunt not of the glorious sire
'Thy flight dishonours.'—As she spoke, she stood
To sight confess'd, and view'd the Chief askance,
Now first retreating, with a lowering brow
That roused the hero in his soul. He stood
Abash'd; yet spoke not, but resolved on death,
Or final conquest, met each adverse hand.

AND now, the Queen celestial stood reveal'd
Before the flying host, and stay'd their course
Alike by deeds, and threats: th' etherial shield
She bore aloft, and held the flaming sword
Unsheathed, that rivall'd, as it waved around,
The solar orb's effulgence. O'er each host
Towering in aspect terrible, she raised
Her voice, and in reproachful words began:

'WHERE seek ye shelter, cowards?—In the waves
'Ye left so late? Scarce is the fire consumed,
'That gave your flaming navy to the winds
'Of heaven; nor now one shatter'd bark remains,
'The dastard's last resource, to stem the surge.

'Turn from your flight; nor dread the hell-born shape,
'Nor dread the throng that thunder in your rear.
'I shield the brave: the Sovereign of the skies,
'Gives force resistless to this arm in fight.
'But know, the trembling herd that seek the camp,
'Driven but by terrour, and the present ill,
'Death waits, or worse than instant death—Despair!'

HER words, by deeds enforced, and power divine,
Stay'd some; but more, the terrour of her arm,
Her port terrific, and portended spear.
Yet, not an angel's voice had given their hearts
To feel enlivening hope, or turn'd the croud
From flight, driven headlong to the roaring main;
But, from the left, a joyful shout was heard
That spoke of friends, and needful aid, at hand.

WHILE yet the fight, on either side maintain'd,
In doubtful balance hung; the pair, conceal'd
Deep in the sheltering woodland, with their troop,
O'erlook'd the war. They held the rout behind
The giant tribes, in awe; nor gave them scope
To pile, as wont, rude fragments on the field,
Of rocks, or roots torn rudely from the soil,
That fill'd the giants' hands, who swung around
Each ponderous mass, and hurl'd it on the foe.

THUS while they served great Brutus, and with-held
Gerontes' crew from deeds, decisive else
Of final conquest; as they cast their eyes

Back on the plain, they saw the battle swerve;
They heard the shouting Albians, and the roar
That told the triumph of Romerus' hand.
As on the farthest limit of the lake
Of Huron, or Ontario, or the bank
Of Oroonoko, pouring on the deep
A sea-like tide, the naked Indian stands
Aghast, what time an interposing orb
Darkens, on heaven's wide arch, the flaming noon;
Portending wrath divine; with shouts he tries
To drive the dragon from his helpless prey,
Now struggling in his grasp, and lifts to heaven
His supplicating hands: not less, the Chiefs
Saw with amaze, and dread, the Trojan host
Upholding perilous, and unequal fight,
A while; and now the signal of distress,
The standard back receding.—'Lo the friends
'We left, recal us, on the dangerous edge
'Of fate!'—Albanus thus exclaiming, led
The way. The troop pursued him, and in sight;
With voice that roll'd in thunder to the shore,
Assail'd the foe behind. Fierce was the shock;
And noise discordant of conflicting powers.
Meanwhile, the Monarch of the pit beheld,
O'erwhelm'd with deep dismay, the changeful scene
Of fight, that late so prosperous, thus declined
Even in the instant, when he deem'd its end

Irrevocably fix'd. He saw, and knew
An awe that sunk his heart, the power divine
To earth descending, with the sword that mocks
Angelic force. He beheld his mate,
With dread recoiling from th' effulgent blaze,
Heaven's genial ray. Yet unresolved, he stood,
Whether to meet, in his own native form,
The guardian Queen in combat, and assault
With *arms far other than the spear and shield*;*
Or yielding to the time, entrust the war
To other hands, and hold his strength reserved
For some great effort, in the last extreme.

DEEP pondering thus, he call'd the throng around,
That bear his sovereign mandates, and reveal'd
To these his secret purpose, to remain
Deedless, till Nature's Lord declared his will;
Then with the thunderer to contend once more
In arms, if needful.—'Go,' 'twas thus he closed
His speech, 'by me supported, though unseen:
'And drive yon numbers to their camp. Let night
'Befriend them; nor incite the conquering host
'To scale their ramparts now. A fitter hour
'For this great work approaches.'—While he spoke,
Wrapt deep in clouds, he shunn'd the heavenly form,
Not unobserved: she mark'd th' infernal King;
And though prepared for combat, if assail'd,
Yet not unpleased, now shunn'd a fight so dire.

* See B. 19.

Struck with unwonted sounds, the guardian Queen
Approach'd the fury. On th' ethereal frame,
Pure elemental air, the darts that shot
From every quivering nerve, were shower'd in vain.
New to the shape, she mark'd it; and aside
Turn'd her refulgent eyes, while thus she spoke
Averse:—'Thou inmate of the darkest shades
'Of hell, descend; and may the gulph of fire
'For ever wrap thee!'—On the rocking ground,
Thus as the guardian said, she launch'd her spear.
It burst!—The smoke in spiry volumes roll'd
Black through the void; and far remote, the wail
Of misery resounded. Stooping low,
She seized the *Pest*, and dash'd her quick to hell:
One parting yell she raised; but ere it spread
Abroad, the frame of earth resumed its form,
And closing sudden, wrapt her from the view.

Ere this, Eugenius, with his warlike mate
Young Alban, and a train in battle tried,
Came to the fight exulting. In each breast,
But chief in Alban's heart, the genius pour'd
New fire, and gave each hand resistless sway.

As when thy crew, Pizarro, stood in arms
Ranged on Peruvian shores, before the throne
Of Atabalipa, who deem'd his life
Secure, amidst the multitude, convened
To guard their monarch;—what amazement seized

The Indian race, when first the din of war
Assail'd their ears, and tubes impregn'd with fire,
Bore ruin on their wing; such, when they heard
The shout behind them, and beheld the band
That raised it, scattering fate, the dread that struck,
Mixt with surprize, the giants; of their hope
Deprived, and menaced by determined foes.

ALBANUS led the way, keen with the fire
Of youth, and ardent, by some mighty deed
To prove his high descent; he aim'd his lance
At Lormus' breast, a giant champion, roused
By their long shout, who turn'd to meet his doom.
While yet he gazed around, the weapon drank
His heart's warm stream: he dropt on earth supine,
And panting, writhed in death. Eugenius nigh,
(He saw 'twas vain to stay the youth's career,)
Join'd shield to shield. The cohort closed around
The pair, and desperate in their course, o'erturn'd
Whate'er opposed their force. Great Phlegon lay,
With Erymanthus, stretch'd by Lormus' side:
Headlong they fell; one by Eugenius' spear,
By Callias' weapon one; and with a roar
That shook the echoing desart, breathed their souls.

AMAZE, when turning thou beheld'st the change,
Seized thy great heart, Romerus!—When he saw,
Foes from the woodland, bursting on their rear;
His friends, his children, in the forest lodged,

And left unguarded, as th' invader's prey,
Rush'd on his thought: for, in the mind that prompts
Heroic acts, though yet th' unfinish'd mould
Speaks but of Nature's hand; each feeling lives
Beneath th' unseemly vesture, that adorns
Life's gentler walks, and cultivated scenes.

FORTHWITH, he warn'd Gerontes of th' event
He fear'd. The monarch, eager to avenge
His daughter's fall, and sate his heart with blood,
Now held in sight the Trojan camp, and felt
The demons urge him onward. What he heard,
With horrour thrill'd his heart. He bade his bands
To turn; and ever ardent to obey
Th' impulsive appetite, had backwards rush'd
In flight precipitate, with all his powers;
But that Romerus check'd his course, and gave
Far wiser counsel.—Yet the battle paused
Amidst their talk; and Troy's returning host
Came with new ardour to the fight. Nor now
The hell-born race opposed the guardian Queen;
Awed, thus the Highest will'd, before a power
Heaven-taught, and breathing energy divine.

MEANWHILE great Brutus, whose superiour mind,
Serene in stern adversity, retain'd
Its fortitude unshaken, saw the war
Beyond his hope restored; when human means
Had nought avail'd to turn the scale declined,

ANDROGEUS met not now with all his force,
As late, the Trojan host; nor sought to cope
With Brutus' arm in fight, though yet he stood
In blazing arms before him: and the host
Of Troy, so lately from their flight recall'd,
Fear'd, but behind their King's protecting shield,
To meet the bands of Albion, with their Lord.
Hence, pondering long, at last the Chief consign'd,
To the great leader of the Lycian throng,
His troops; and shooting to the right, inspired
New hope in every heart. Albanus saw
As yet his followers unsubdued, and rush'd,
With his glad friends, to join his God-like sire.

PLEASED with the changing scene, the sov'reign look'd
A grateful heart; not of th' Eternal King
Unseen, nor unapproved, snatch'd from the verge
Of fate, what time he weigh'd with heedful thought
Th' eventful war: he deem'd th' attempt were rash,
To gain once more the ground so lately lost
In flight, or turn destruction on his foes.

THE sun low-verging, and the camp so near,
Now call'd the numbers to repose. He bade
The host retire. Himself assumed his place,
With great Megistheus; Camber, and the Prince
Of Sparta's warlike legion, in the rear.
The bravest, there repell'd with shields combined,
The fierce assailants, who with shouts pursued,

Yet conquering, as they deem'd, the Trojan powers.
His troops, now shelter'd in their camp, appear'd
Along the ramparts spread: Great Brutus last,
Revered, and awful, even amid the shade
That veil'd his better hopes, ascends the gate.
It closed. The nations from their toil respired,
And ceased at once the battle's wasteful rage.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK XVI.—

THE ARGUMENT.

At the time, when BRUTUS laments, amidst the silence of night, the departure, and perhaps the death of LOCRINUS, which he anticipates, and is prevented by the song of the Bard from giving way to despair; that Hero, wandering in search of ALMERIA, arrives at the cell of the Druid with whom she resided, where he again meets her; and is well received by her Guardian. The Arch-Druid acquaints this Prince, that before dismissing, he would instruct him in the fate of his posterity. Being therefore conducted to a proper place for witnessing those events, they pass before him in vision. 1st Scene.—A Roman Camp. Adrian's wall. Prospect of the country, and state of the inhabitants, under the Romans. 2d Scene.—The wall broken down. Anarchy, and desolation, occasioned by the irruptions of the northern Barbarians. 3d Scene.—Of Britain under the Heptarchy. State of the country. Landing of the Danes. Ineffectual efforts to resist them. Of England under ALFRED. The Druid closes the scenery of this book, with some account of succeeding devastations, which pass in review before the spectators; and with some observations on the cause that rendered Britain a prey to foreign nations;—her ignorance of maritime affairs, and want of a Navy.

SPENT by the labours of the well-fought day,
The leaders sought their tents. Alone, the Chief,
Amid the silence of the sleeping host,
Mused on the past. He saw the smiling forms,

So late that danced in hope's delighted eye,
Fled as the passing shade. The mighty heart,
By hostile armies unappall'd, that bore,
In perilous fight, as in the calm of peace,
An equal tenour; as Locrinus rose
Before him, heaving with a father's woe,
Now felt a pang that thrill'd in every vein,
And shook its prison walls. With hasty feet
He traversed o'er the tent.—'My son, my son,
'Ah! whither, whither roam thy steps?' he cried,
'If yet, (a sudden groan suppress'd his voice)
'If yet thou livest!'—Dire images, that spread
A night of horrour o'er his mind, depress'd
With dread, denied him utterance. Now, an host,
A giant host, assail'd a single arm
In fancy's vivid ken; anon, the waste,
Pathless and wide, received him, from the foe
Escaped; with all its famish'd tribes abroad,
Watching the stranger's solitary tread
In mazes lost, and wandering from his home.
LAST, on the remnant of a far-spread host
His thought revolved; all, with inquiring eyes,
Turn'd on their hapless leader. From his view,
Hope veil'd her face a moment; while he gave
One burst of human passion to the lot,
The changeful lot of MAN. Thus, but not long,
He stood desponding. Soon his soul regain'd

Its wonted fortitude.—'Yes; let me bear,
'Great Lord of Nature, (thus he cried) the ills
'That courage cannot ward. Rough is the road,
'And dark the passage to th' oblivious stream
'That bloats remembrance out. But let me face
'In arms the peril: Resolution, cool,
'And sternly tranquil, sweeps obstructing rocks
'Aside, and leaves a gazing throng behind,
'All wondering on her path.'—Thus as he spoke,
He heard the *Bard;* and while he stood entranced,
Drank notes that swell the long-resounding lyre.

HE sung the Son of Jove, by heaven ordain'd
Thy slave, Eurystheus, labouring up the steep,
On whose high summit, *Virtue* sits enshrined
In light celestial. Honour and renown
Graced on each side the heaven-descended power.
One held a crown, effulgent from the throne
Of his great Sire, aloft; and one, the trump,
Whose breath along the vast of nature, sends
The hero's deeds; and bids the hand of TIME
To immortality consign the name.

HE sung the monsters that opposed his course;
The Lernian Hydra, and th' Oenian stag,
The Centaur race, and Erymanthian boar
With dauntless hearts, and conquering arm subdued.
His mighty acts perform'd, the poet raised
His song, and sweeping all the sounding strings,

Hail'd the freed spirit, soaring on the winds
To heaven; his father nodding to the voice
Of fate, that placed him on a throne divine.
He ceased. The monarch felt rekindling hope
Throb in the pulse of life. He bless'd the sign
Of favouring Jove, and, on his couch reclined,
Sunk down serene in short, but deep repose.
Meanwhile, unconscious of the scenes that rose,
And sunk by turns, Locrinus held his course
Onward, along the solitary waste,
Now chear'd by hope, to reach th' insulting foe
Before him still retiring, or deceived
By threats, and boasting of the matchless might
He sought not to exert; anon resign'd
To dread, to deep despair, when night prevail'd,
And silence spread around; when, as he stands
To catch the dying murmur, that retains
Weak hope; that murmur glads his ear no more.
All night, the hero roam'd forlorn, and sad,
Along the waste, in mazes intervolved,
As chance directed. Now he sought the stream,
What time, desponding sounds, in fancy's ear,
Roll'd down the current, borne by winds afar;
Or in the rustling foliage, heard the tread
Of stranger near approaching, and in hope,
Enjoy'd some intercourse: false hope, and vain!
No stranger's voice, nor human step descried,

Broke the deep silence of the night.—The Chief,
Raising to heaven his thought, pursued his way.
YET, not unheeded of superiour Powers,
He trode the wild. A chosen spirit ruled
His course, and while he roam'd, in devious paths
Perplex'd, convey'd him onwards, to the cell
That held his loved Almeria. At th' approach
Of morn, he mark'd the Druid's peaceful dome,
Nor knew, that there the nymph beloved of heaven
Reposed. Yet high in hope, the hero kept
The path that led him to the sacred grove.
Now flaming on the ruddy orient far
Aurora look'd effulgent, with an eye
That brightens heaven and earth: Locrinus pass'd
Still onwards; when the grove appear'd in view,
And now to sight disclosed, the sacred fane.
A FANE it was, of rude, but simple work,
Framed of collected fragments, from the rock
With mighty engines hew'd; and set around
A wide circumference: a branching oak
Rose in the midst, and held an ample space
Beneath its boughs o'ershaded. On the side,
Turn'd to the solar orb's meridian ray,
An altar stood, and near, the tools prepared
For ready sacrifice. Beyond its bound,
A dome appear'd amid surrounding cells,
Spacious, and arch'd above. Its roof, of turf,

O'erspread with mantling boughs, repell'd the winds
Of heaven. Rude stones composed the massy wall,
Not without art cemented, and inclosed
A consecrated space, where lived retired
The Druid Chief, with meek-eyed peace, his guest,
And simple innocence. His children, (thus
He named th' inferiour ministers) possess'd
Cells, scatter'd near promiscuous; whence they came,
A blameless race, with silver-flowing hair,
At his command assembling.—At the porch
They stay'd; and turning, with due rites adored
The Lord of heaven and earth; then chearful, spread
Along the verdant green, employ'd in talk,
In rites mysterious, or in songs divine,
Spontaneous flowing from the melting lyre.

Such, to Locrinus, stood th' unfolding scene
Now seen at hand. The hero stay'd his course,
And on the strangers gazed with wistful eye,
Struck with unwonted reverence.—Nor the tribe
Less fix'd in wonder, eyed the man divine,
A God in gesture, cased in flaming mail,
As if inured to combat; yet who seem'd
In sorrow, not in wrath. In silence, all
A moment paused; when slowly from the rest,
The Druid Chief came on, and beckoning, call'd
The Prince, secure of welcome, to approach,
And share th' embrace, and hospitable board.

With fix'd attention, while th' inferiour train
Survey'd the stranger, gazing on his form,
His port, his height, his roomy chest, his eyes
Though clouded yet effulgent, he approach'd
Th' abode; but ere he reach'd its porch, beheld
His lost Almeria, from the central dome
Advancing, beauteous as the Queen of love
Gay-robed, and breathing in poetic song,
Warm from thy hand, Aglaia! Undismay'd
She seem'd, and calm, though anxious thought impress'd
The lovely face, that kindled into joy
What time she saw Locrinus. He exclaim'd
Aloud, with transport, as he mark'd the fair,
The idol of his heart, thus beyond hope
Restored. He clasp'd her instant to his breast,
O'erpower'd by passion.—Nor the charming maid,
Veil'd her soft feelings from his sight, but sunk
As one entranced, in his warm embrace,
Half met, and half return'd.—The Druid priest
In all divinely taught, received the Chief
With reverence; led him with his beauteous mate,
In heart rejoicing, to his home, and call'd
His God, to bless the heaven-directed pair.

The first endearments pass'd, when each rehearsed
Th' alternate tale, with heedful ears received,
The sire arising, sought the sacred grove,
Big with some high intent. Alone, he plunged

Amidst the shade, and held, with forms unseen,
Mysterious conference.—Anon he trode
The lawn, as one who felt the God within
His breast, exalted. At the well-known sight,
The priests convened around him, all prepared
To mark some great event.—A pause ensued,
A solemn pause!—What wonders might ensue,
Inly they meditate. Nor long, they stood
In thought suspended, when the sage display'd
A bough, divided from the sacred oak,
That bore Andraste's name, and quivering, show'd
In every living vein the breath divine:
Endow'd, (such wond'rous gift the God conferr'd)
With power to change by touch, th' external forms
Of Nature, and obsequious to the thought
That scans futurity, disclose to view
New scenes, from all but pure illumined eyes
With-held.—The spirit of the fane diffused
Around the prophet's head, ethereal rays,
And as in light invested, ere he spoke,
His form. Beside him, stood the lovely maid,
High raised in hope.—All drank with eager ear,
His words, when gazing on his favour'd guests,
With looks of cordial love, he thus began:

'HEAR, ye beloved of Him, who utters words
'From yonder shrine, of high import; who gives,
'In that still moment, when the virgin holds

'The sacred knife extended, her rapt sight
'To mark the forms, that o'er the gulph of time
'Glide dim ;—attend !—Great Tanaris unveils
'To you futurity : He gives your ken,
'To trace the Queen of nations, from her rise,
'Through paths, along the glorious field of fame
'Involved, and intricate, through perils met,
'And nobly conquer'd, in her high career
'To empire, widely spread.—To you, the Power
'Consigns a boon, even from your sire with-held,
'Though loved of God. He grants you, to behold
'BRITANNIA's mighty sons, transform'd from fierce,
'And stern barbarians, by no law controlled ;
'From exiles, starting nightly from their haunts
'In dens, and caverns ; by superiour power
'Expell'd the plains to spoil their native fields ;
'By foes possess'd that revell'd in their halls ;
'From suppliants, crouching at a tyrant's nod,
'And huddled in their huts, what time the bell
'Announced the *Conqueror's* stern command ; like herds
'Driven from their pastures, at th' appointed hour,
'And coop'd promiscuous, in the fold :—from these,
'Transform'd to liberty's imperial sons,
'A god-like race, that o'er the world of waves
'Hold sovereign rule ; in commerce, arts, and arms
'Alike unrivall'd ; by the nations round,
'Beheld with envy, but approach'd with dread ;

'Whose wide dominion, stretch'd along the vast
'Of ocean, as of earth, the mounting sun
'Rolls o'er his circuit, to behold :—Attend!
'And mark the scenes with heaven-illumined view!'

THUS, while the Druid spoke, the forms around
Dissolved; and where the woodland spread abroad,
Or wastes that echoed to the wolf's wild howl,
A pleasing prospect spread. Along a plain
Of wide circumference, imperial domes,
And smiling villas stood in sight. The fields
Here waved with yellow corn, unfolding there
A camp, invested with a mound of turf,
And fosse to guard it, from assault secure.
Tents in long rows disposed, to sight display'd
A city, peopled with the sons of war;
With streets that echoed to the clang of arms,
And shone with flaming mail, while round the fence,
Towers rear'd at stated distances, forbade
The foes' approach. On their high battlements,
Ensigns appear'd, that show'd the bird of Jove,
Great type of conquest, and of sovereign rule!

A MIGHTY host, along the space within,
Was seen in regulated files. The Chiefs
Knew each his separate province; and the bands
Moved, as inform'd by one inspiring soul,
What time their leader gave command. They seem'd
A tribe to victory inured :—the Lords,

Not natives of the Isle, who from a race,
A simple race, as yet untaught to know
Thy blessings, liberty, received, whate'er
The land produced, in tribute; nor received
With pride. The people lived beneath their shade,
Pleased, though not free; and, as they deem'd, secure
From dire misrule alike, and barbarous war.

FAR, on the prospect's northern bound, arose
A wall of length interminable, flank'd
With towers, in height, and strength, surpassing far
The bulwarks of the camp: a work it seem'd,
To stand for ages unremoved, and quell
Th' invader's fierce assault, howe'er impell'd.

PLEASED with this varied scene, Locrinus dwelt
A while, with pleasure on successive views,
Not without wonder seen: but soon surprise
And indignation roused him.—'In these slaves,
'Tell, if I mark the natives of the land;
'In those, their Lords?—Say, father, if I form
'A right conjecture; thus the hero said,
'Whence is this servile race, and what the Chiefs
'That hold dominion o'er them?'—To his words
The Druid thus;—'In yonder tribes, who roam
'Along yon vales, thou seest a race who boast
'Their line from thee derived; in those who man
'Yon camp, the conquerors of mankind. Though barr'd
'From perfect freedom, yet the peaceful train

'Live in their fields content: yon wall retains
'The barbarous people of the North within
'Their wastes; surrounded by the world of waves,
'On other sides; while laughing plenty shakes
'Her horn, in triumph, o'er the smiling land.'
'YET they are slaves,' th' indignant Chief resumed,
'Slaves to yon haughty victors, who defend
'At once, and spoil them:—Gods! the dastards lift
'No spear!—These civil plunderers drain their strength,
'And teach them arts, to glut th' unsated heart
'Of grasping avarice, with spoil:—Away,
'My soul disdains the race.'—Locrinus spoke:
Nor unapproving, thus the sage replied:
'TIS true, they serve: but know, that in the cell
'Of thraldom, all drain not alike the cup
'Of misery, promiscuous; but degrees
'Obtain, of wretchedness, even here. Thou know'st,
'Great Prince, how wide the distance of estate,
'Twixt him, who, barr'd from freedom, yet beholds
'His cell illumined by the golden day,
'And feels its genial warmth; and him, immured
'Deep in the gulph where slavery clanks her chain;
'Who hears the revel of intemperate joy
'In halls, but late his own; and groping round,
'To reach the scanty morsel, that supports
'A miserable being, grasps instead
'The rooted wedge, that holds his bonds secure.

'These, thus subservient to a master's will,
'Yet live at ease. Their best estate appears:
'Now lift thine eyes, and mark the worst extreme.'

WHILE yet he spoke, the host, so late beheld
As conquerors, vanish'd; and the natives, left
To guard their land, in martial aspect stood
High on the bulwark raised by abler hands;
Or on the plain beneath, assumed a rough
And warlike semblance. In Locrinus' heart
Joy rose, when thus he saw them, free to seize
Their foes' possessions, or defend their own.

NOT long, the stranger tribe o'erlook'd the field,
With wishful eyes; when from the northern vales,
Screen'd by the wall from sight, the roar of hosts
With war, and dissonance, arose! The troops
Who lined the bulwarks, launch'd with eager arms
The spear, or hurl'd in thunder from the height
Their rude materials, all intent to guard,
From foes, their native fields: but soon the cause
Appear'd. The turrets shook; and heaved beneath;
As by some earthquake, rock'd the tottering wall.
And lo! the loosen'd fragments, that announce
Approaching ruin in their fall!—It comes!
Yon shrieks proclaim it! As a foamy wave,
That headlong rushes on the gulph below,
One tower, with all its freight of arms and men,
Shook, bow'd, and tumbled on the plain! A breach

Was seen, and through the void, a barbarous rout,
Naked, and rude, with long dishevell'd hair,
Wild, and of aspect fierce! They scaled the mound
In haste, and scornful of restraint, assail'd
A weak, and timid few.—The few o'ermatch'd,
Bore not their fell attack, but cast their arms
Aside, and fled dispersed along the fields.

As when the locust tribes, prepared to scourge
A guilty land, o'er Abyssynia spread,
Wasting the vales of Tigre in their course,
Or Gojam's thymy hills; before them, shrinks
At once the verdure of the smiling vales,
Bleak, arid, desolate; thy fertile plains,
Fair Albion, as the dire invaders raged,
Thus show'd, in ruin heap'd, their fierce career.
The infant cities, rising on the lawns,
With young inclosures graced, and verdant meads,
Now sunk beneath their power. The people, bred
To peace, and all unskill'd in rougher arts,
Fell unresisting. Desolation swept
The land; and bathed in blood, oppression drove
Her car in triumph, o'er the helpless race
Left as her victims: in her march, she shook
The scourge aloft, and clank'd the galling chain.

Grief, ire, and fury, swell'd Locrinus' heart
By turns, while viewing with indignant eye,
A change by all unhoped.—But ere his voice

Was heard, the father thus pursued his tale:

'KNOW, Prince, and ye who not unheedful, mark,
'Nor undiscerning, these eventful scenes!
'That Power Omnipotent, who holds the reins
'Of empire in his hand, will grant the Chiefs,
'So late beheld as conquerors, to possess
'Supreme dominion.—I behold even now
'The world subjected to their sway!—I see
'Thy race, the sons of freedom, in the lapse
'Of many a rolling age, maintain their cause
'Against the conquerors of mankind; and yield
'At last to generous Lords, prepared to smoothe
'Their manners, yet unpolish'd, by the arts
'Of elegance, and peace! The land assumes,
'As these advance, a cultivated form:
'And, where the wilderness held in its shade,
'Huts widely spread, and brave, but savage, men;
'The mead, the villa, and the smiling lawn
'Lie, as thou saw'st, extended.—On the north,
'A hardy nation, by no laws restrain'd,
'Bold, fierce, and warlike, roam their native hills
'Secure; and pour like torrents down the steep,
'To waste the neighbouring lands. That bulwark, raised
'By *Roman* hosts, (so call yon conquering Lords;)
'Repell'd their rude attacks; and while the swain,
'Screen'd in his little hamlet, slept at ease,
'Restrain'd the plunderers, that by night assail'd

'A simple train, unskill'd in deeds of war.
'But know, illustrious Chief, that not to man,
'Heaven gives perpetual rule. Th' Eternal holds
'Two mighty orbs suspended in his hand,
'Charged with the fate of empire, that ascend,
'Or sink by turns, to mark the rise, or fall
'Of nations in their course:—Imperial Rome,
'The world's great empress, from her height declined,
'Now fills the lighter globe. I see the North
'Pour forth like insects, her innumerous sons,
'To heave th' unwieldy fabric from its base,
'Of Roman greatness, raised through many an age!
'Before them, Destiny extends her sword,
'Strong in th' Eternal's might; and from the wide,
'And spreading region, sweeps with wasteful hand,
'Contending monarchies away! The power,
'That in its strong embracement, held at first
'A world invested, now contracting, leaves
'Th' extremes unaided. Hence, yon barbarous host,
'Like wolves that herded scorn the lion's roar,
'Rush from their caverns madding, and assail
'The mound that sinks before them. Thou behold'st
'Its weak defenders fled. Through perils tried,
'And nobly conquer'd, by th' unshaken thought,
'Heaven gives the Queen of Nations, to ascend
'The topmost pinnacle of fame. Behold
'A scene of other times that swells to view!'

THUS while the Druid spoke, the forms around
Dissolved in liquid air. A seemly race,
Rude, but not savage, spread along a land
Graced with brown hamlets, fields, and leafy bowers,
With golden fruitage, gleaming through the boughs
To tempt the ready hand. The people seem'd
Inured to deeds of arms, as to the sports
And toils of rural life: for, as they pass'd
Each wore a dagger by his side, and laid,
On its rough furrows, as he plough'd the field,
The shield beside him. Here, the mellow horn,
And there, the trumpet call'd by turns, the swains
To rural labours, or to fight.—The fierce
And sudden contest, as irregular bands
Met, while they scour'd the plain; the bounds assign'd
To each possession; and the various face
Of war, or peaceful scenes; of busy throngs,
Here mix'd in mirthful dance; and there, engaged
In plans of infant commerce; spoke the rule
Of many Lords.—A few, of nobler kind,
Closed round with mountains, and the roaring main,
With freedom lived remote, amidst a wild,
And distant region, shut from human kind,
But free, to chase along resounding vales
The deer, with light heart, and rejoicing song.

WHILE yet the Druid and his train survey'd
The scenes intent;—*Seven mighty Chiefs* appear'd;

Each bearing in his scepter'd hand, the mark
Of rule, and on his head, the golden ring
Spangled with starry drops: a warlike port
They held, and stern demeanour; bound alone,
By common interest: jealousy, and rage,
Else ruled their hearts by turns, and drove them on
To deeds of desperate kind, and ceaseless war.

PLACED on the farthest limit of the land,
A rock projecting o'er the flood, repell'd
Its strong assault; and he, who gain'd the height,
Saw far beneath the world-investing deep,
Display'd in boundless view. The leaders scaled
Its side in silence; for some great emprise
Now seem'd to labour in their thoughts. They reach'd
At last the top, and turn'd their eyes, that look'd
Suspense and dread, alternate on the main,
And on each other; as with heed, to learn,
What fear, or hope in every heart prevail'd.

WHILE yet they paused, the prophet heaven-inspired,
Bespoke Locrinus, and the listening train:

'MARK,' thus he said, 'when Rome's imperial race
'Depart; what new and dire events arise!
'Know then, the natives of this land, assail'd
'By Northern hosts, who, as thou saw'st, will lay
'The mound in ruin, that withstood their arms
'At first; invite a nation to their aid,
'Of foreign lineage. These, a mighty power,

'Arrive, disperse their foes, but turn their swords,
'When urged to leave the land, restored to peace,
'Against the friends they aided; and by force
'Drive them, o'erpower'd by numbers, from the plains,
'To yonder space, invested wide around,
'By towering hills, and by the western main.
'That labour o'er, they spread their rule secure,
'Along the champaign regions, now their own.
'O'ER these, the leaders on yon rock beheld,
'Now share the sovereignty; and name their league
'(Seven Princes ruling with unbounded sway;)
'Heptarchia. He, who seems above his peers
'In place exalted, o'er the rest presides,
'Supreme in dignity: succeeding times
'Will name him *Egbert*.—See, his eyes explore
'Ardent, the world of waters! Now behold,
'On yon dim wave, half-mixing with the cloud
'Skirted with fluid gold, what forms appear!'

THUS while the Druid said, the hearers gazed
In silence on the deep, that seem'd a waste
Shoreless and desolate.—A while 'twas thus:
But while they look'd, a dark, o'ershading line
Bounded their wide survey. What seem'd a cloud
When first discern'd, proved, when beheld at hand,
A fleet with pointed horns, and sails display'd,
Shaped like the lunar orb, when first the sun
Streaks her dim edge with silver. To the coast

It bore a course direct; then spreading, moved
In rude magnificence, along the waves,
Unmatch'd in strength; and ere it reach'd the land,
Form'd full in sight, a long, and equal line.

WHILE yet, the Druid's wondering train beheld
Forms slowly brought in sight; a race was seen
In aspect strange, and various, on the decks,
Arm'd with the battle axe, the dart, the bow,
And quiver'd arrows; warlike in their guise,
And strong, to baffle might, and spurn control.

MEANWHILE, the natives gathering on the strand,
At first in wonder fix'd, survey'd a race
Unlike themselves in manners, as in arms;
And doubtful of their purpose, yet abstain'd
From fight. But when the strangers sprung to land,
And shouting, rush'd to slaughter, their bold Chiefs
Hurl'd fierce defiance on them: down the rock
They sprung; and soon the mellow horn was heard,
The beacon flaming on th' aerial hill,
Call'd, as it blazed from height to height, a brave,
And martial people, to the fight. An host
In haste assembled, fill'd the sounding shore,
And fearless plunged in battle. Nor the foe
Met, less resolved the combat: as he leap'd
On land, each forward press'd, to leave behind
For his compeers a space; while all, with shouts
Holding the axe aloft, and bent to hew

Their path to conquest, through the closest ranks,
With blood and ruin mark'd their direful way.

THE Druid Chief indignant, wrapt in shade,
This scene abhorr'd. 'Avails it,' (thus he spoke,)
'To trace grim slaughter, in the blood that stains
'Her walk; to show a desolated land
'By her own children now, and now, by foes
'Laid waste. Yet beaming thro' the night, I see
'One orient star arising!—I behold
'Its rays, while Alfred, in one mind, unites
'The king, the patriot, and the hero, flame
'Direct on Albion! Hail, illustrious name,
'Thou first of monarchs, hail! To thee, 'tis given
'To tame the rude barbarian, to extend
'Thy reign, fair science, o'er a happy land;
'To bid thy native region rise, in fame
'To foreign realms extended:—Lo! the deep,
'The scene of many a triumph, first beholds
'In thee, its sovereign!—While I gaze, the clouds
'Close on the glorious prospect; night again
'Involves the land, and screen'd beneath her shade,
'Rapine, and anarchy, resume their sway!
'Again, the clang of horrid war resounds
'Even to the midland shades; again, the shriek
'Tells of some violated maid! The sire,
'The wife, the husband, with their offspring, bear,
'Even from the straw-roof'd cottage, to the dome,

'Or tower, with battlements afar beheld,
'One general face of woe. Such ruin points
'The reign of ignorance: such waste proclaims,
'Not that thy sons are feeble, though they fall
'Before each fierce invader,—but unskill'd
'To use the strength they feel, that yet they stand,
'Though great, yet conquer'd by inferiour power.
'KNOW thou, my son, though victory awaits
'In many a field, to spread *Britannia's* fame,
'(A name that late will strike the world with awe)
'Though I behold, on Gallia's spacious fields
'Her hosts even now triumphant, and her kings
'With captive monarchs in their train; though leagued
'With other nations, still she leads the world,
'The first in danger, honour, wealth, and fame:
'Yet is *the broad, and world-investing Main*
'Her great, her *native* element.—Her shores,
'Not mighty bulwarks, nor an armed host,
'But WOODEN WALLS must guard!—this first defence
'Yet unexplored, thou seest, that every foe
'Wastes her rich fields uninjured.—But, when time
'Shall to her wondering sons, unfold at last
'Their strength, and where it lies, a fame, beyond
'What nation, ever in the height of power,
'Yet claim'd, awaits her: wealth, from every clime
'Pours on her coast; her rivals hide their heads,
'Envy, admire, and tremble. But to view

'These glorious scenes at length, sight unimpair'd
'Is sought, and mental vigour: Ere I spread
'This mighty prospect, let a pause restore
'To each, its keenest energy.'—The forms
Fled while he spoke; while on the sage revered,
As on some God, the rapt beholders gazed.

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK XVII.—

THE ARGUMENT.

A view of ENGLAND, under Saxon, is succeeded by a repreſentation of it, under Papal dominion, in an exhibition of King JOHN and his Barons, when the Power of Liberty deſcends from heaven with the MAGNA CHARTA, which ſhe delivers to the people. The Druid then touches ſlightly on the conqueſt of FRANCE, the Civil Wars, &c. ſtill keeping in view the ſtate of Government, the progreſs of Commerce, and of Naval Greatneſs.—The third ſcene preſents a view of ENGLAND under ELIZABETH, when it had attained conſiderable maritime power; and contains an account of the ARMADA, of which the aſpect and conqueſt are ſucceſſively repreſented. Some natural queſtions, ſuggeſted by the dreſs, arms, &c. of the people, are anſwered by ſome account of the progreſs of the Arts. In reply to LOCRINUS' inquiry concerning the Northern inhabitants of the Iſland, he is told, that a long ſeries of wars between the inhabitants of the two kingdoms would terminate in their final and perpetual coalition. All things being now prepared for the laſt exhibition, GREAT BRITAIN appears in all her glory, as at the concluſion of the war, 1762. The ſplendour and magnificence of the metropolis; the THAMES covered with the ſhips of all nations; the buſineſs, freedom, wealth, power, and commerce of GREAT BRITAIN; her navy; her extenſive empire in the EAST and WEST INDIES; and laſt of all her dominions in AMERICA;—are ſucceſſively objects of this viſion. The whole concludes with an account of a recent FRENCH maſſacre, terminated by a deſcription of the celebrated victory of ABOUKIR. The ſcenes being now withdrawn, the Druid, in anſwer to a ſuppoſed queſtion, by what inſtruments ſo great purpoſes would be effected, ſhows LOCRINUS ſome of the illuſtrious men, by whom the arts and ſciences would be cultivated: he touches here on the greateſt philoſophers, poets, literary writers, and hiſtorians, down to the preſent time. He cloſes all with a ſuitable exhortation to LOCRINUS,—who, after a fervent addreſs to the Deity, retires with the Druid, in order to make preparations for his return to the camp.

SOON as a pauſe, and frugal meal reſtored
To all, the ſpirit waſted in the view
Of former ſcenes; again the father call'd

His sons around, all eager, while they scann'd
With wishful eyes the future, to behold
The Queen of nations rising into fame.
'ENOUGH of dire oppression, (thus the sage
'Pursued) enough of arbitrary rule,
'Of war, and civil discord.—Now behold,
'On the broad concave, dimm'd by many a cloud,
'The Sun of Liberty ascending! Mark!
'The scene that usher'd in the glorious day!'
HE spoke;—and rising to his mighty theme,
As one by heaven inspired, held high his wand
O'er fields, that at his word, dissolved in air
At once. A sudden darkness wrapt the scene!
Slow as it pass'd, the sun's returning rays
Disclosed a river, on whose bank, was seen
A spacious city, and a plain around
That seem'd of boundless circuit. While the train
Look'd on, a shout was heard announcing war;
And lo! two hosts, in formidable guise
Stood fiercely opposite! In this, a Prince
Bore on his head, and in his scepter'd hand,
The signs of royalty: assembled Chiefs
Stood ranged in that for fight,—in some great cause
Prepared it seem'd to perish, or prevail.
'YOUR eyes, ('twas thus the Druid spoke) betray
'One general wish in all. Ye seek to know,
'What arms the leaders of yon numerous bands

'Against their sovereign.—Mark his deeds, and learn
'The cause!'—While yet he spoke, the monarch strode
In sight, distinguish'd from th' obsequious throng
That bent around him, by th' imperial ring
That graced his forehead; not by kingly deeds,
Or virtuous seeming. By his side, a *Priest*
Whose meek demeanour show'd a man of peace,
Veiling, beneath the mildness of the dove,
The vulture's appetite, observant bow'd
At first, with eyes declined. Oft, as he spoke,
He mark'd the adverse host with steady gaze,
Raising his arm aloft; and oft, as one
Who breathed the dictate of a guileless heart,
Before it mildly spread th' attesting hand,
Thy symbol, purity! anon, he seem'd
To gather courage as he spoke, and pride
That scorn'd an equal, from the hearers' calm,
And patient sufferance of his words: he cast
A glance indignant on the Prince alike,
And on th' assembled host; as one who claim'd
Some right, with threatening looks, announcing ire.
Not more the culprit stands abash'd, and pale
Before the judge, whose word, with terrour heard,
Decides of life, or death,—than seem'd dismay'd,
And awed, the sovereign of a mighty race,
Before a foreign master, arm'd alone
With power, in voice, and gesture. Bent he sat

With eyes depress'd, and hesitating, weigh'd
In thought, some dubious point. At last he rose,
And meanly came, descending from his throne,
Before th' imperious judge, supinely stretch'd
Amid his Chiefs, at ease: He came, and laid
The regal circle at his feet.—The Priest,
As his own gift received it, pondering long
And looking oft around him, as in doubt,
Who best deserved the mark of sovereign sway.
SLOW to resolve he seem'd, yet deign'd at last,
To eye the monarch suppliant as he stood,
With grace. He beckon'd his approach, and placed
Once more the crown imperial on his head;
But as a boon consign'd it, and with threats
Seem'd from his humble vassal to require
Homage, and prompt obedience to his rule.
'GODS! (thus the Trojan Prince with rage exclaim'd)
'What wretch appears, by some capricious fate,
'Raised o'er yon host of slaves! What meanness marks
'His course, obsequious to a stranger's law,
'Who bears no warriour's badge, but seems by pride
'And inborn arrogance alone upheld!
'Say, what his office?'—'Know,' (the Sage replied)
'A Priest, by nations as their God adored,
'Will rise in future times, to hold the world
'By superstitious terrour, not by power
'In thrall; and on his errands, many a slave

'Will trouble kingdoms. He, before thee placed,
'Has raised yon civil discord, thus to gain
'The purposes by fraud, that force had fail'd
'To reach. He courts yon adverse host, machines
'That move obsequious to his hand. But mark
'How Heaven, by means mysterious and unseen,
'Works mighty ends, that slowly rise to view.'

WHILE thus he spoke, the stranger seem'd appeased,
And unattended, sought the hostile camp,
As in himself secure. All, where he trode,
Hail'd their new guest with reverence; and prepared
To hear his words in silence. While he strove
To win by smooth address the listening throng,
And veil'd, beneath insidious phrase, his dark
And secret purpose, not a look betray'd
One Chief's impatience. But when he assumed
A stern demeanour, and pronounced their Prince,
The vassal of his Lord, the general voice
Spoke fierce defiance of his boast: they drove
With scorn, and rage, th' intruding Priest away;
And spurn'd, contemptuous of his words, the claim.

THE foreign Lord dismiss'd, the Chiefs confess'd
Their fault, returning to their native King;
But not with suppliant hearts, to bend the knee,
And own his power unbounded:—O'er the field
The voice of liberty re-echoed: long,
And loud, was heard from every mouth the peal.

As when the son of freedom first announced
To Athens' rapt and wondering sons, the fall
Of Persia's mighty numbers, on the plain
Of Marathon; an universal shout
Bursting from every heart, alike impell'd
By one prevailing impulse, spoke acclaim
Unmixt:—a voice that bore the glad assent
Of all, thus echoed to the distant main.

When lo! from heaven a power ethereal came,
On wings, that gleam'd with many a splendent hue,
Borne on the winds!—When, ceasing from her flight,
She trode the field, her auburn locks appear'd
Unbound, and floating on the liberal air!
Her eye, far-beaming, held within its ken
A wide expanse inclosed; her forehead high,
And open countenance, her port divine,
And bold demeanour, all announced the Queen
Of Liberty approaching; Her, who holds
Amidst the choir that gird th' Eternal's throne,
A place distinguish'd. In her better hand,
She held a scroll extended, and aloft
Exposed it full to sight.—Locrinus mark'd,
High-raised in splendent characters, the name
Of MAGNA CHARTA!—'Take, (the Power Divine
'Thus spoke, and seem'd, while speaking, to consign
'The prize she brought to one selected Chief)
'This charter framed in heaven, to fix my reign

'And bless my chosen people; to secure
'The rights of mankind from th' oppressor's grasp,
'And awe the tyrant on his throne. Receive
'The gift with thankful reverence, and preserve
'Its terms inviolate: hence shall ye rise
'To honour, dignity, and matchless fame.
'KNOW, *Ye the sons of freedom,* (with a voice
'That pierced each heart, the spirit celestial said)
'While yet your Princes keep the sphere assign'd,
'Nor rashly break the barrier, that divides
'Justice from violence, and legal rule,
'From arbitrary sway: while with their states,
'The people's chosen ministers, who meet
'To guard the monarch's honours as their own,
'They hold accord unceasing; high renown,
'Triumph, and wealth, and victory await
'To grace Britannia's annals. But when fraud,
'Pride, lust, ambition, stain the sovereign's breast,
'Or prompt the subject, with encroaching hand,
'To circumscribe his rights, as here defined
'By heaven:—I see the Queen of nations fall,
'Even on the instant, from her envied height,
'To mix inglorious with the herd she spurn'd!
'Use then this treasure, and be bless'd.'—She said,
And soaring on th' aerial azure, rose
Triumphant o'er the scene. All, as she sought
Her native regions, eyed her on the wing!

When now the gliding forms dissolved in air,
And all was still around,—the father turn'd,
And to the wondering stranger, thus began:

'KNOW, Prince, th' event thou sawest, will be the (theme
'Of future history, and fix the bound,
'Then first determined, of the various claims
'Of King, and people; yet not brought at once,
'But slowly to perfection. Other times
'Will see the monarch, and the subject, break
'The limit well defined; that, ruling oft
'With uncontrolled dominion; and the tribes,
'Thus ruled, encroaching on the regal power.

'I SEE, (but each succeeding scene to bring
'In sight, were vain,) the nation waste its strength
'In useless wars, though glorious, in the course
'Of long revolving reigns.—Ah! what alarms
'Are thine, proud Gallia, when this conquering race,
'Led by their Kings, yet reckless of their just
'And truest interest, o'er thy spacious plains
'Pour on resistless! From a scanty band,
'I see thine armies shrink!—The host, even now
'That flamed, with Princes towering in its van,
'And lengthening files behind; what sudden shower
'Of arrows thus discomfits! From a troop,
'A little troop of Albion's noble sons,
'Toil-worn, and wasted with disease, the cloud
'Ascends! and lo! the mighty legions feel

'The deaths, and scattering, fly on every wind!
'Not with more ease, the eddying tempest sweeps
'Dry dust before it, when the traveller pants
'For breath, than yonder band of heroes drive
'That Gallic host! Proceed, ye god-like few!
'Fame waits to crown, and celebrate your toils.
'Yon city, fenced till now from every foe,
'The seat of empire, yields; yon regal domes
'For you unfold their gates: an Albian Prince
'Assumes the power of Gallia's conquer'd Kings!
'I see him, now triumphant!—Ah, 'tis fled!
'An infant Prince succeeds, a monarch doom'd,
'Through life's long scene, to buffet many a storm.
'AH! Whence this civil discord? What revenge
'Inspires those factious leaders? Whence the blood
'That stains the maiden *white* of yonder *rose*,
'And deeper dies that *crimson* chaplet? Ye
'Fair daughters of the summer ray, that scent
'The gale with odours; on the virgin's breast,
'That waft around your fragrance, as she joins
'In solemn sacrifice, when music lifts
'The soul to Tanaris; why stand ye thus
'On war's rough front, the signals that invite
'The sons of havock to their work?—Ye types
'Of ruin, vanish, yield to happier days,
'To days of gladness yield; when both unite
'To grace one scepter'd hand, and faction gnaws

'Her curb, loud-raving in her cave again.
'YET, midst those scenes, by false ambition plann'd,
'This lust of conquest, useless when acquired,
'And perilous in th' attempt, I mark the reign
'Of commerce, widely spread: I see, behind
'The cloud, bright liberty array'd in gold
'That gilds its flaming verge, approaching near!
'Still nobler seems the form; and as she feels
'Her native strength, she rises into fame.
'BUT mark! what glorious prospect strikes the sight!
'It claims attention:—hark! what solemn sound!'
HE said, and instant, what absorb'd so late
Each thought, dissolved in air. The Druid seem'd
To tread a rock's stupendous height, and saw
His hearers placed around him.—Far beneath,
Old ocean bore, as with the weight oppress'd,
Fabrics of solid oak, enormous frames,
In sight like floating towers, and widely spread,
Beyond the ken of sight. Extended sails
Convey'd, along th' immeasurable main,
The ships; a fleet, in number, as in strength,
Beyond what Greece assembled, to oppose
At Salamis, or Mycale, Persia's Prince
Girt with innumerous hosts;—beyond the powers
That met in Actium's spacious bay, to hold
(A confluent nation gazing from the shore;)
In doubt, the world's great empire. As they came

Nearer, a row of iron tubes, appear'd
On wheeled engines roll'd (new sight and strange!)
On their strong sides; nor long they stood amazed,
Pondering their use, when, as the headmost ship
Advanced, the hollow engines charged with fire,
Pour'd their long peal in thunder to the shore.

FAR o'er the coast, with many an opening bay,
And populous city graced, an host appear'd,
Form'd of the natives of the land, who stood,
In aspect stern, all ardent for the fight,
Yet to their Chiefs obsequious. In their hands,
They raised with ease, machines of lighter form,
With nitrous fuel stored, that as it burst
In quick explosion, made th' expanse resound.

NOR less, these warriours of a later age,
Appear'd in vesture as in arms, unlike
To those of ancient days. No radiant mail
Flamed on their breasts: but wooly vestments wrapt
Their limbs; and moving in embattled lines,
Not on his single prowess each relied,
But all united broke the tide of war.

HIGH-TOWERING in the van, a female form
Moved through the ranks resplendent; and in thought
In act, in gesture dignified, assumed
The lead; and, as the ruling spirit, gave
To all an energy divine.—Her brow
Imperial honours graced; and in her walk;

She seem'd the genius of the isle, sent down
From heaven, in mortal semblance, to protect
And guard her sacred trust from every foe.

THUS, while some great event appear'd to rise
On fate's slow-working wheel, a scene so new,
Kept every mind intent: men train'd to fight,
Unarm'd with spear and shield, but launching fierce,
With dreadless hearts, the thunderbolts of Jove,
And heaven's own fires, that rive the solid hill;
Their ships, stupendous hulks compactly join'd,
Where parts in aspect various meet, to reach
One mighty end in union; and transport
O'er ocean's wide extent, th' adventuring race,
Not more to coasts, and well-known bays confined:
These held them all, but chief the Trojan Prince
Deep-pondering long.—'Say, father, what new train,'
(At last he thus exclaim'd) 'arises slow,
'As time's great wheel revolves, in aspect, dress,
'And arms, so widely varying from the tribes
'We see array'd for fight? Say, has the Lord
'Supreme, to these, his favour'd sons, consign'd
'The forked bolt so dreaded? Are their forms
'Cast in impenetrable mould, that none
'Seem for defence prepared, though all, like Jove,
'Darting ethereal fires to blast their foes?
'Those ships of matchless bulk, what Godhead form'd?
'What breath divine conveys? Old ocean groans

'Beneath their weight; and, if I deem aright,
'A foreign people steer them to the shore.
'Whence, too, those vessels of unequal size,
'And force inferiour far, that seem design'd
'To guard the land? Does Albion meet, with these,
'And brave th' impending ruin?—Say, what God
'Assumes that female form, and towers sublime
'Amidst embattled hosts?—She comes, perhaps
'To save a nation, else a prey to death,
'And fate remediless!'—The hero thus
As one perplex'd; while fix'd attention still'd
The rest to silence, gazing on the sire,
Who eyed them smiling, and serene, replied:
'Not to excite a vain desire, and leave
'That wish unsatisfied, I bade these scenes
'Revolve; what heaven permits me to declare,
'With thankful hearts, and judging thought, receive.
'KNOW thou, the Lord of Nature grasps alone
'In his right hand, the thunder.—Yet the sons
'Of industry and art, in future times
'Rifling the stores of Nature, will extract
'The living spark from every nitrous mass;
'And mimic fires, that as the bolt of Heaven,
'Bear fate, and ruin on their wing. Of these,
'Thy race, Britannia, in succeeding days,
'Will hold the foremost place.—You see them raised,
'Not to the topmost pinnacle of fame;

'Yet in an age of splendour, and renown,
'Of wealth, and triumph placed. Ye mark, alarm'd,
'Yon fleet so powerful hovering on the shores!
'Know, from *the Monarch of the West* it comes;
'The mighty Lord of many a spacious realm,
'Who, with the riches of a world unknown
'To us, that teems with treasures, and the force
'Of his united kingdom, would subdue
'This land, the nurse of his determined foes!
'Behold its mighty sovereign, in the form
'Thou deem'st of race divine!—Though weak the ships,
'To yon proud structures of stupendous size
'Opposed; though cast in penetrable mould
'Yon host as we; nor arm'd with sword and shield;
'Yet know, the spirit of *Britannia's Queen*
'Informs her God-like sons!—I see it work!
'Mark now th' event, and wonder!'—While he spoke,
The ships of Albion caught the coming gale
With sails wide-spread: The busy throng within,
Launch'd on th' illimitable deep, elate,
And uttering long acclaim. Their country's love,
That native of the heart, to action roused
Beneath the sovereign's animating eye,
Each kindling spirit, and inspired the whole.
As in some forest wide, as that which clothes
The bleak Norwegian wastes, or from the cliffs
Of Caledonia shade the western main;

When bands of wandering hunters chanced to wind
The shrilling horn remote; the hostile troop
That caught afar its accent, sought the foe
In aspect terrible; with bows, and spears,
And arrows wing'd with death. The vales around
Rung with their uproar, as they mix'd in fight
With dauntless hearts:—the navies' hostile bands
Thus met; and such the shout of those behind,
Their country's last resource, that lined the shore,
Beneath Britannia's Queen. She ruled her host,
Moved in their front, and ranged them on the field.

Meanwhile, th' invading power, as if secure
In force superiour, tow'rd the coast, advanced
Majestic in its course; and tried to hold
Th' inferiour fleet within an orb inclosed.
Nor Albion's hardy sons, on ocean launch'd,
Or seem'd to dread them, or despise. They came
Borne by a steady breeze, behind their Chief,
Who stood conspicuous on the foremost prow.

And now the battle join'd; a scene of death
New to the rapt beholders, nor conceived
By fancy, scanning each terrific form,
Amid her dreams of horrour, as the theme
Of song! Th' artillery, charged with nitrous flame,
Shook even the distant bay. A cloud involved
Each fleet, and through its shade, the void of air,
And wave far-gleaming, seem'd on fire. Was heard

No more the wind, or wide-resounding main.
Not tempests meeting in the torrid zone,
With louder noise encounter in mid air,
When broad Coanza from the channel stirr'd,
And Danda, feels through many a league, their rage,
Than now the foes, while yet, in balance, hung
The fate of Albion. As the cloud dispell'd,
Sails, masts, and cordage, on the flood appear'd
Floating promiscuous: here the tower-like bulk
Hemm'd as in siege, by ships of smaller size,
But mann'd by crews of matchless courage, torn,
And rent, lay tumbling on the deep; while there
The ships of Albion, shatter'd by the weight
Of bolts, discharged from mighty engines, claim'd,
And gain'd assistance. Each maintain'd the fight
A while suspended: but at last the force
Of *British* arms prevail'd: the foes' long line
Gave space, now broken, to the lighter ships
That meeting, closed around th' unwieldy frames.
And now, the guardian of the sea-beat Isle
Call'd all the elements abroad, to bear
Afar the triumph of her nobler sons.
Roused from their cells, the madding winds arose,
And from their wild wings shook the forests' spoils,
And gathering vigour in their strong career,
Pour'd on the watery waste! Th' expanded sails,
And heavier ships received them, while secure

The slighter vessels rode at ease. At once,
Heaved from its base, the roaring ocean burst
On wooden barriers, nor prepared to yield,
Nor firm to break the torrent. Hence the fleet,
So terrible but late, was scatter'd wide
Along the deep: the dream of conquest fled:
All toil'd alone for life, and many sunk
In that last trial, though the generous foe
Essay'd, with desperate hands, to snatch a few
From fate.—That task perform'd, as if the main
Revered its native Lords, the waves convey'd
Their ships trinmphant to the shore.—A shout
Resounding, gave the flitting scene to air.

'I SEE, (Locrinus thus with transport spoke,
'A joy till now unfelt:) what mighty deeds,
'Deeds darkly shown, yet waking in the mind
'High thoughts, await, in some succeeding age,
'To grace this great, this heaven-protected land.
'Yet, if thou bend'st with patience unsubdued,
'To my request, propitious; nor the power
'Who gives thy thought to penetrate the veil
'Of dim futurity, withdraws his aid;
'Say, father, then, what fate awaits the sons
'Of those, so fierce, and barbarous as they seem'd,
'Who rushing from the North, with headlong course,
'By desolation mark'd their rout?—Some Prince,
'Arm'd with the force of all th' extended Isle,

'I deem, will raise to its last height the power,
'And fame of Albion.'—Thus the hero said,
And thus the sage with placid eye replied:
'KNOW, Prince, ere yet the people of the North,
'That as their clime, tempestuous, sweep aside
'All opposition, join in cordial league,
'With their disdainful rivals; many a field
'Will tell, in characters of blood, their rage,
'And hate. Though power superiour arms the sons
'Of this broad region, and their foes confined
'Within a narrower sphere, will cease to spoil
'Its fairest provinces, secure of prey;
'Their Kings, yet girt with formidable bands,
'Will check thy great descendants, in the course
'Of victory; will by expanding, waste,
'And dissipate their strength.—'Twere vain to show
'The scenes, even now that swim in prospect near,
'Rude scenes of havock, rapine, rage, and death,
'While yet, these kindred nations meet, like foes
'Inflamed with deadly hate: 'twere vain to paint
'The scenes of civil discord, that precede
'The reign of liberty: know, that the power
'Will spread at last o'er all the peopled clime
'Her undivided empire:—in a late,
'But glorious age; an age, ordain'd to see
'The barrier fixt, *that shields the people's rights;*
'And *bounds the sovereign's rule;* the Goddess, here

'Will fix her reign for ever; and unite
'In one, two mighty nations, even in name
'The same; the sovereigns of mankind; the dread
'At once, and envy of surrounding lands!
'I SEE a race,' (the Druid, heaven inspired,
Thus spoke,) 'a race, call'd from a neighbouring state,
'To fill Britannia's throne, her ancient Kings
'Expell'd their country, in the strife, that speaks
'A generous people struggling to be free!
'Great Gods! What triumphs grace th' illustrious line!
'What conquests rise before me!—O'er the main,
'What navies ride sublime! What vessels, fraught
'With stores, and glittering in the sun, convey
'The wealth of every clime, to yonder shores,
'Crown'd with imperial cities! What broad stream,
'Sees pendants fluttering on its lucid wave,
'From earth's remotest scenes, now traversed first
'By Albion's dauntless sons; and seas unknown,
'That bear with pride the sovereigns of the main!
'To give the theme its utmost bound; to show
'The triumphs of a nation, as in arms,
'In arts unrivall'd; that extends its sway,
'From regions chear'd with morn's ascending rays
'The first, to hills that meet the setting sun,
'Tinged with his fading radiance; were a task
'For human thought too vast.—Yet heaven permits
'A part to spread. It rises into view!'

He said; and as the former scene dissolved
In air, another region stood display'd,
Mantled in living hues. At once, thy stream
Imperial Thames, roll'd its broad wave: at once
In all the pride of wealth, Augusta rose;
O'ershading all its banks: with fanes, and towers;
With spires aerial, and the pile that speaks
Of art, and elegance, adorn'd. Its streets,
Increasing numbers ever fill'd.—A dome
Of wide circumference, ascending high,
O'erlook'd the city, and unbounded fields;
Spires, from its airy battlements, beheld
Beneath, and all the glittering works of man;
Scann'd by the dizzy eye-ball, from an height
So vast, like streamers dancing on the wind!
They saw the palace of Britannia's Kings,
The seat of sovereign rule:—nor far, the pile;
Ancient and venerable fane, whose arch
O'ershades the reliques of her greater sons;
In arms, in arts triumphant; where the bust,
Yet, from the sculptor's forming hand that breathes;
Speaks of departed worthies, to the heart,
In strains of eloquence divine!

On these they dwelt successive, but survey'd
With eyes intent, the pillar'd arches, rear'd
Along an ample square's protracted sides,
To shade the sons of commerce; here convened

The deputies of mankind; to decide
Of human weal.—The busy numbers seem'd,
When seen at hand, in colour, aspect, dress,
And gesture various; from the race matured
Beneath a temperate sun, whose features glow'd
With health, and genial warmth; to that, embrown'd
By heat, or blackened in the solar blaze.
Here, in their ministers, the *Nations* form'd
One vast Assembly; and before their *Queen*
Consign'd the tribute of each distant shore.
'THOU seest, (indulgent thus the father said)
'What wealth Britannia shares. Now, lift thine eye,
'And mark the tide that bears it!'—O'er the flood,
While yet he spoke, Locrinus roll'd his eyes:
And saw the ships, that commerce calls her own,
Display'd in all their pride.—The river bore
On its broad wave, a kingdom: all was throng'd—
In action all. The bustling crowd disposed
Here of an Indian freight, from happy isles,
Bright orient isles, whose fruitage scents the gale,
Convey'd; the sparkling gem, the clouded vase,
Figured with colours, of the parent sun
That borrow lustre; melting into forms
Of fancy's gay creation: there, the breeze
Perfumed with spicy fragrance; and the ship
With nectar'd treasures fraught, that mock the sweets
Of Hybla's dropping combs, announced the growth

Of distant regions, on one favour'd coast
All met.—A fleet in other parts they mark'd,
With swelling sails, that launch'd into the main,
Stored with each product of the British soil,
Or what her provinces convey, beyond
What sates the natives of the parent land.
The crews prepared with joyful hearts, to bear
Their country's high renown to every coast,
Speak of her fame, and bid the world revere!
THESE, while the Chief explored with raptur'd thought,
New objects rose in sight.—He look'd abroad,
And lo! the WOODEN WALLS appear'd in view,
That gird the sacred Isle; its best defence,
And noblest boast at once! The tower-like forms,
O'ershading in their course the subject deep,
Seem'd in approach: their open ports display'd
Engines of solid brass, or iron, framed,
Disposed in double rows, and stored within
With magazines of death. From deck to deck,
With fearless hearts, and free demeanour roam'd
The busy mariners: this, by the helm
Stood fix'd, to guide along the world of waves,
His charge with steady prow: that, on the yard,
Seen, like an eagle on th' aerial cliff,
Hung o'er old ocean imminent; or scaled
The mast's unmeasured height: some, tried their force
In mimic fight, while joyous in their walk,

Some chear'd the wild waste with enlivening song.
'BEHOLD the sons of LIBERTY! Behold,'
The sire with transport spoke, 'the race, ordain'd
'To spread in times remote, their country's fame,
'O'er seas where never vessel plough'd the wave;
'To bear destruction to her foes, and break
'With ease their utmost force! Nor deem, thou seest
'In yonder squadron, Albion's naval power
'In all its greatness. Thou beholds't her now,
'Crown'd in a glorious war, with matchless fame;
'In every region of the *Globe* renown'd;
'O'er every foe victorious.—Could thine eye
'O'erlooking oceans, mark the distant lands,
'That meet the smiling morn; a kingdom there
'A land of luxury, would rise to view
'Peopled with Britons; and surrounding seas,
'As that, o'ershaded with their fleets!—Behold
'Yon ships that glide before the rising gale,
'With streamers glittering in the noon-day beam!
'See, on their painted galleries, what gay gold
'Is spread, what symmetry and strength appear
'In each high frame; though spacious, yet adorn'd
'With all that elegance bestows! These hold
'Inclosed, what Nature's lavish hand confers
'On Eastern climes; the children of the sun;
'Bright gems, and vases tinged with Tyrian dyes,
'With pearl, and spices, gums, and shining ore.

'Yon fleet, just peering on the distant wave,
'Conveys, whate'er Hesperian isles unfold,
'Of treasures stored within the nectar'd cane,
'And wrought for various use; fruits ripe to taste,
'Mellow'd, and dropping unguents, that exhale
'Rich odours, spreading on the scented air!
'Britannia's ports, from every clime receive
'Its various product; and her equal hand
'Presides, while nations bless her temperate reign.
'But, not by these, great as the forms appear,
'And vast, the British empire stands display'd
'At large.—I see another world, explored
'Far on the bosom of the western main,
'Where yonder orb celestial pours the day
'What time he leaves our darken'd shores.—One last
'But mighty prospect, yet demands thy view.'

While yet the Druid spoke, Locrinus saw
Columbus' world arising, far unlike
Whate'er of former scenes his eyes beheld.
It seem'd composed of wood-lands, as the parts
Successive pass'd in sight; of boundless lakes,
Of mountains, in their height surpassing far
Thy spire, imperial Teneriff; of vales,
With diamonds, glittering in the babbling rill
That boasts far richer, than Pactolus' sands;
Of rivers, swell'd with many a subject stream,
With sea-like force descending; and of tides

That o'er the cliff precipitating, shake
In fancy's vivid dream, the central base!
But chief the people took Locrinus' eye,
A sable race, in each prevailing mode
Of life, distinguish'd from their kindred men.
Beneath the spreading foliage, here they roam'd
In rude simplicity; and of its fruit
Spoiling the loaded bough, luxurious drank
Its heart-refreshing juice; or in the shade
Of trees, whose broad, and leafy boughs o'ermatch'd
A wide circumference, prepared the rites
That nature shudders but to name: enjoy'd
The pangs, that shot through every burning nerve,
What time, the human victim writhing slow,
Consumed in lingering flames, or felt the stab,
Yet short of life, that spoke unsated rage;
Or saw, the spirit trembling in its home,
The limbs already lopp'd, the butcher's prize,
Gorged as his dire repast.—These scenes, the Chief
O'erlook'd, while nature bore the sight, but turn'd
His eyes with horrour back, and heard with joy,
His guide.—'Thou seest, what dire barbarians share
'That world, employ'd in acts till now unknown.
'Mark now the triumph of each nobler art,
'What time, the sons of Albion shall extend
'Their conquest o'er it. What thine eye discern'd,
'Of forms beheld successive; from the bowers

'Whose foliage spreading spoke a genial sun,
'To frozen regions, winter's drear abode,
'Heaven gives the Queen of nations as her own.'

He said; and lo! the new-born world appear'd
Array'd in other vesture, and o'erspread
With new inhabitants! Imperial spires,
Raised on the margin of the roaring main,
And peopled cities, show'd the strangers' power.
Low sunk the boundless forests; and where erst,
Were thorns and thickets, smiling herbage rose
Along the plain, rich fruits, and flowering maize,
That breathed of culture, and successful toil.

Nor less the sea, than long-extended shores,
Announced a race improved in every art.
There ships, prepared with every wind to sail
Spread wide the British empire. From the ports
At land, and from the mast sublimely raised,
Britannia's ensigns waving high on air,
Display'd her conquests, and supreme command.

Here paused the Druid.—Sudden, on the main
His keen eye darting, through the triple night
That wraps the future, mark'd ascending forms!
A cloud o'ercast his aspect:—now to heaven
He look'd in doubtful silence: as he lower'd
Anon his eyes, indignant anger shook
His frame: alternate horrour, rage, and dread
Pass'd o'er his features, working, as the scenes

Before him spread successive, and awaked
Dark troubled thought.—At last he burst in words:
'GREAT Source of Being,' thus he cried, 'will e'er
'A nation rise that set their standard up
'Against the *Highest;* and revolting, dare
'The God to launch his thunder?—Forward, bend
'Thy sight; a prospect yet unknown, appears.'
WHILE yet he spoke, loud uproar met his ear,
As from discordant voices, and a croud
Innumerous;—distant spires, beyond the deep
Tower'd on the blue horizon: bells that peal'd
A loud alarm, roll'd on the troubled air
Sounds still remote:—yet nearer seem'd the land
To move, when lo! a city rose sublime
In proud magnificence. Locrinus scann'd
Its gay exteriour; but the noise within
Announcing tumult, call'd him from the view.
HERE o'er the streets, a madding throng impell'd
This way and that, like ocean's stormy waves,
The sport of meeting whirlwinds, roll'd amain,
Blaspheming Heaven! A few, who moved their hands,
Like tools to work dark purposes, inflamed
Their rage to frenzy.—'Thither turn your course,'
They cried, and pointing, show'd the walls that hold
The sons of misery enthrall'd. Deep sounds
Of lamentation, from th' interiour space,
Were heard. But these the leaders of the crowd

Drown'd in loud shouts.—Meek pity veil'd her face,
And sighing, from the barbarous rout withdrew,
To weep in silence.—'Burst yon iron doors,
'There lodge your victims: drag them into day.'
On rush'd the mass precipitate; the doors
Flew wide: the prison gave its sons to light,
But, not to liberty. An hoary band,
The hallow'd messengers of God to man,
Now stood in sight, with clasped hands, and eyes
Raised to their great AVENGER!—Soon was heard
The death-denouncing toll. A thousand swords
Flash'd on the day: a thousand breasts stood bare
To sheathe the thirsty blades! And lo, the blood
Of heart-struck innocence that sends aloft
From earth, a still, but heaven-attracting voice,
Smoaked in the path! Youth, on the flinty soil
Sunk, with his death's wound struggling; while the locks
Of age, lay spreading on the purple stream,
That soil'd their lucid silver. All recoil'd
With horrour frozen at the sight!—'Hide, hide,'
At last Locrinus cried, 'this direful scene.
'Where is thy lightning, Jove? Is there above
'No flash to blast these butchers, and avenge
'Thy sacred messengers, for such they seem?
'Is there on earth no bursting fire to hurl
'Yon towering city on their heads?'—The sage
Here check'd his transport. With a mind inspired

By other than the Delphian God, whose voice
Utter'd mysterious warnings from his cell,
What time the sounding of Apollo's lyre
Was heard within; he saw the cloud dispell'd
That veils the future; and sedate, replied:

'In yonder multitude, by frantic rage
'Driv'n headlong; know, not all, of impious deeds,
'In equal measure share the guilt. The croud,
'As streams, obsequious to the gales that fan,
'Or work them into tumult; thus impell'd,
'Obey their leader's voice; yet seem, as moved
'In all by guiding nature, and the will
'That prompts spontaneous choice. The Chiefs who rule
'Their deeds, precipitant and blind, impart
'To these their headlong fury: hence, the swords
'Thou saw'st, are weapons in a madman's hands.

'Yet on the proud blasphemer, who defies
'The Lord of Nature, while he lifts his arm
'Against his ministers; the God, who gave
'Their high commission, showers his wrath.—Thy race
'He gives in charge, among assembling powers
'Who bear His scourge; to lead the bannered hosts
'Arm'd in his cause, to triumph. Mark a scene,
'New to the sage, who speaks to future times
'In just record: ev'n by the piercing eye
'Of rapt imagination, when her thought
'Teems with eventful, and mysterious dreams,

'Yet unexplored.—It rises into view.'

WHILE yet he spoke, the flitting forms dissolved,
Wrapt in surrounding mist, that opening slow,
Disclosed a bay, on whose extended field
A foreign people pour'd in arms. In vain
The feeble natives, all with trembling hands
In haste collected, stood in arms, to stay
Their headlong course. Before them, as the leaves
That meet a tempest thundering down the height,
They swept the croud, and spread along the strand.

NOT far, within a port, by rising mounds,
And tubes, that pour a fiery torrent forth,
Guarded on either side, a navy rode
In triumph as it seem'd, and form'd a bow
Of wide circumference, whose sharp extremes
Approach'd the shore. The giddy race that mann'd
The decks, unheeding, roam'd as varying choice
Impell'd; and hurl'd defiance to the powers
Alike of heaven and earth. Their fleet was moor'd;
Fenced round with engines, whose deep throats disgorge
Death's iron messengers: and with their sides
Turn'd to the main, and heaving on the surge,
They stay'd, contemptuous of whate'er opposed.

'MARK, in the throng promiscuous, (thus he said)
'Who line those floating towers, in their wide course
'That hold the rude and angry surge inclosed;
'The sons of night, the heaven-devoted throng,

'So late, with ruthless hearts, who spurn'd the corse
'Of bleeding innocence.—Heard you that shout?
'Look where th' Avenger comes!'—He said, and held
His hand extended to its mark, afar.

Low sounds along the world of waters borne
They heard, as of acclaim. Calm was the tide,
The sun advancing to his noon, the breeze,
As from the shades of Hybla, or thy groves,
Ternate, or Mindanao; while they fann'd
The deep's smooth bosom, shower'd with fluttering wings
Dews fraught with healing balm, from every shore.

The sound increased;—and now, a mighty fleet
In triumph riding on the waves, appear'd.
Onward, with pride, the long-extended line
Of ships, with sails expanded to the gale,
Came full in sight.—'Are these of Albion's sons?'
'Of Albion's sons, (the sire replied) ordain'd
'To work a glorious end.'—When seen at hand,
All seem'd prepared for instant fight: the decks
Clear'd for the work; the brazen throats of death
With fuel glutted; and Britannia's sons,
Here ranged in shining rows, and there, intrench'd
Behind those deep-mouth'd engines, that announced,
(As erst the voice on Sinai's flaming mount)
What Heaven ordain'd, in thunder. On the foe
Impell'd by happy gales, they rush'd amain.

In number equal, but in height, in size,

In weight superiour far; the hostile fleet,
In form, an arch, whose convex stood opposed
To meet the shock, lay as at ease; of force
Reckless they seem'd, and (erst their dread) beheld
Britannia's streaming ensigns, undismay'd.

O'ER all high-raised, one ship, the boast of art,
The pride of nations, in the van appear'd,
To guard the rest: reclining on the flood,
As on a bed, whose undulation gave
To sight her majesty of form; she gave
The sign of conflict; as in warlike form
Her opposite approach'd.—They met; the hills
Shook at the roar that spoke of rage, and war.

MEANWHILE, the vessels on the right, that form'd
The line of Albion's navy, held their course
Onward; but turning, ere they reach'd the shore,
Their prows, and piercing, still with prosperous gales,
In its extreme th' opposing fleet; assail'd
On an unguarded side, the mighty frames.
And now the battle closed, while o'er the coast
Around, assembled multitudes enjoy'd
A scene so new, so terrible:—but smoke,
Amid successive peals, enveloped all
In sevenfold shade; nor yet, when darkness veil'd
The void horizon, was it known, what side
Prevail'd; till Heaven announced its sovereign will.

FOR lo! a fiery pyramid arose

Ascending through the night, and cast a gleam
Horrific o'er the deep, that dimly show'd
What yet remain'd unknown !—The hostile powers
They saw dispersed, and in the midst, beheld
The ship, so late the boast of Gallia's sons,
That proudly eminent, o'erlook'd the main.
Rent were her shatter'd sides, and from her stern
Flames bursting sudden, spread from deck to deck,
Her domes superb, by lavish art adorn'd,
And piled in triple rows ; her crackling masts
And sails in tatter'd fragments, rose aloft
In one wide wasting blaze ! Tube, after tube,
Discharged its thunder-bolt, and in the gulph
Sunk prone. The flying sparkles, in their course,
Assail'd the nitrous magazine.—A blast,
Like that which cleaves the rent rock from its base,
Toss'd on its wing the bursting frame, in air !
At last, Aurora in her orient walk,
Dispell'd the shade ; when of the squadrons, late
Beheld in combat,—one was lost : the ships
That hurl'd their proud defiance, in the roar
Of loud artillery, on Britannia's sons ;
Loose shatter'd hulks, lay tumbling on the surge,
The victor's prize, in triumph dragg'd along,
The proud blasphemers of the Lord of heaven,
Before his offspring trembled : and the hands
Bathed in the blood of innocence, and raised

Aloft in madness, clank'd the galling chain.

WHILE yet Locrinus stood in wonder rapt,
Nor to the thought gave utterance, that inform'd
His breast; the Druid, closing as he spoke,
The theme, intent and serious, thus began:

'THOU seek'st to know, by what slow-working means
'Heaven in succeeding ages, will effect
'Ends of such high import: not heroes train'd
'To fight; not conquerours thus improve mankind.

'KNOW thou, though nations far removed, may boast
'Of wits inventive, various, and sublime,
'Though arts that to th' inquiring mind disclose
'New figures, by the nicest touch improved,
'Will please alternate, and inform their kind;
'Yet, as in arms, even here Britannia's sons
'Will hold the foremost rank.—On every theme,
'That fills the human mind; on every scene
'That calls gay fancy to expand her wings;
'What train in *Science* skill'd, or versed in *Art*,
'Lets in resistless light!—I see a sage,
'Man while he names him, will exult to see
'The human intellect approach so near
'To what we deem divine: a god-like son
'Of Albion, measuring in exalted thought
'Heaven's mighty arch, unfolding as he scans
'Th' expanse, the laws that hold within their spheres
'The planetary orbs; and to mankind

'In wonder fixt, unravelling all the springs
'Of Nature's secret harmony.* What powers
'Meet in yon great philosopher, whose mind
'Fathoms the depth of science, and extends
'Her else contracted circuit, in his walk,
'As his rapt eye revolves from theme to theme!†
'I SEE a man of comprehensive thought,
'In science, as in wisdom, deeply skill'd;
'Who scans the mind with penetrating eye,
'Th' ideas not inherent, but acquired,
'And brought by just experience, into form,
'As rudiments of knowledge; who explores
'Its reason, fancy, passion, memory, will:
'To man unfolding treasures lodged within,
'But first by him disclosed!‡—On lighter themes,
'Themes ever new, that hold delighted thought
'As in th' enchanter's circle, and supply
'Flowers cull'd from every field; what joyous train
'On yonder lawns disport! Unbeaten paths
'They choose, and see spontaneous foliage shade,
'And blossoms variegate their walk: the thorns
'Shrink at their touch; while o'er the smiling field,
'Beauty and elegance resume their reign.§
'BUT chief, the sons of harmony, the throng,
'With touch ineffable, that break the dream
'Of slumbering estacsy; arise in view.
'Lo, by the bank of yonder willow'd stream,

* Newton. † Bacon. ‡ Locke. § Addison, Steele, Congreve, &c.

'The Son of Nature lies, the parent's loved
'And favour'd offspring; taught, beneath her eye,
'To seize her happiest attitudes; to give
'Her perfect image to mankind, with all
'The wild, the new, the beauteous, the sublime,
'Attendant on her gait!‖—To yonder man
'Of Albion, sinking as with years, and woe;
'Who lifts to Heaven these dim and blasted orbs
'In bitterness of heart; th' Eternal gives
'Internal light; a spirit, on fiery wings
'Rapt to its great original, that soars
'*Beyond the visible diurnal sphere.**
'O YE, in later times ordain'd to share
'These sacred gifts, that while ye please, improve,
'And smoothe the manners of a warlike race,
'As once the fathers of poetic song,
'Who tamed erewhile, and harmonized the mind!
'Whether, along the lyre's resounding strings
'Ye fling a careless hand, and bid the voice
'Of music swell an ever-varying lay;†
'Or soar on *Epic* pinions, or with strokes
'That melt, or raise, adorn the moral song:‡
'Ye, in the page of history, who hold
'A faithful mirrour to mankind; nor there
'Alone display their actions, but explore
'The springs of mighty changes, and of deeds
'That hold in every age the world in gaze,

‖ Shakespeare. * Milton. † Dryden, Pope, &c. ‡ Pope, Addison, Prior, Young, Thomson.

'For you what triumphs are reserved! I see
'The graces sporting in your walk, adorn,
'And bless the land, where science holds her reign.§
'Go now, illustrious Prince, beyond thy kind
'By nature's Lord distinguish'd; (thus he said)
'Fame calls thee to the field, and conquest waits
'With her encircling wreathe, to crown thy toils:
'Go: for the Trojan powers demand thine aid,
'Even now, the sport of proud insulting foes!
'By thee the Lord of nature dooms their fall!
'Nor let the maid of Heaven beloved, disturb
'Thy thought; myself will guard her, and convey,
'What time the shout of battle swells no more,
'To thee the fair, thy future bride. Meanwhile,
'A chosen band shall guide thee to the plain.'
THUS he:—Locrinus cast his eyes around,
And lo, the altar, and the holy fane
Again appear'd; the wilderness beneath,
Waved its broad foliage on the swelling wind.
The hero paused; and as in rapturous thought
He scann'd the scenes;—'Eternal Father! (thus
He spoke, adoring, with uplifted hands
The Lord of heaven and earth;) 'that Thou hast show'd
'To me the wonders of thy power, to man
'So rarely deign'd; that from our loins, will rise
'So great a nation o'er the world revered;

§ Hume, Robertson, Gibbon, &c.

That barr'd th' invaders' hope, obtain'd release,
With peril bought; and knew th' alternate pang
Of shame, reproach, and anguish, when they saw
The field abandon'd to their foes, the slain
Left to a barbarous race, untamed by laws,
Nor moved by pity, or the tie that holds
In love's wide thought the human kind inclosed;
Themselves, just quivering on the verge of fate,
By night scarce rescued, and by power divine;
Their wives, their offspring, trembling at the shout
So near, announcing death. Their last resource
Lay in their mighty leader, whose calm eye,
And firm demeanour, show'd a mind serene.
Him, still in hope th' attendant *Bard* upheld,
Chearing, by prospect now of great reward,
To crown his toils at last; by soothing words
Anon, that held the willing heart in thrall,
Dispelling dread, what time his anxious mind
Revolved Locrinus' fate; by counsel now,
And now by swelling notes, that lift the soul
To heaven in ravishment, subduing care.

MEANWHILE, Androgeus, from the field return'd,
Sought in his tent repose: and musing, scann'd
The sum of things apart, ere yet he join'd
The madding throng that fill'd Gerontes' dome.
Him, thus retired, Trigontes mark'd, and prompt
To seize the moment, came in sight. The Chief

Beheld him pleased; half of his tale apprised,
He knew what chance befel, but not what means
Had brought his friend release. Hence, to his ear
The tale was grateful, of the noble foes,
Who, as a favour'd guest, dismiss'd the Prince
They held as captive; and his mind received
With joy, the hope, that join'd in social league
With stranger hosts, so powerful, and revered
For other than the warriour's hardy deeds;
Their force might tame a barbarous race; their laws,
And arts, reclaim the savage from his rites
Abhorr'd, to virtuous practice, and to laws.
Thus pondering, and resolved, the leader heard
Serene, and gave, in gentlest voice, command.

'PRINCE, (thus he said) thou comest, with tidings
'Of good import: time, and slow-judging thought, (fraught
'Must rule my future deeds: but thou, meanwhile,
'Speed to the strangers' camp; and bear from me
'A message not unwelcome, if I judge
'Of what the time from either host demands.

'THOUGH pious hands have borne from yonder field
'The dead, interr'd in darkness, and deprived
'Of funeral rites; the numbers slain so late,
'Of all who met in fight, where hostile powers
'First knew repulse, lie naked on the plain;
'Nor can the stranger bands as wont, repair,
'And pay the last sad duty to the friends

'They loved, in safety; while our troops o'erspread
'Even to the walls, the place extended round.
'Thou then, impart my words in Brutus' ear.
'Say, that the Chief of Albion's native sons
'Grants him, to grace with funeral rites the slain,
'Four days; beginning, when he marks at morn,
'The Albian numbers, scatter'd o'er the field
'Unarm'd, and busied in a work humane.
'Nor shall Gerontes, if my voice succeed,
'Withhold consent, nor his fierce train deface
'The brave that sunk in honour on the plain.
'Amid this interval of rest from arms
'Some plan well framed, may be devised, to bid
'The rage of battle cease, or, join'd in league,
'To tame a rude, and stubborn race, by power.'

THUS he. Trigontes, with rejoicing heart,
Now held his course to Brutus; while the Chief
Sought, in Gerontes' hall, his old compeers.

NOT with more noise, the shouting hunters mark
Their envied triumph, when the fox, assail'd
By steeds, by dogs, and riders, sinks on earth
Panting, and heaves beneath the fangs that gore
His throat; nor hollow, when the timid hare
Torn by her fierce pursuers, shrieks in vain,
Imploring pity; louder in the voice
Of exultation; than the savage throng
Around the giant monarch, who conceived

Their foes subdued, and trembling in their hold.
Alone, Romerus' mighty heart disdain'd
The boaster's pride: apart he sat, and eyed
The rout indignant; nor partook their joy;
Nor join'd their dissonant and rude misrule.
At last the tumult ceased, when Vortiger,
Their wisest, rising in the midst, assumed
As wont the lead, and on some great emprise
Appear'd intent; deep in his thought revolved.
He, in the scenes of varying fight, had scann'd
With heedful eye Androgeus, and divined
In part, his purpose, from his pause in fight;
What time his troops o'erpower'd the flying foe.
Hence rose a dark design, in secret form'd,
First with Androgeus', and his people's aid,
To rout the stranger-host, nor grant him space,
To form with these alliance; and that end
Obtain'd, to turn on Albion's helpless sons
Their arms, and slaughter, or enslave the tribe,
Their Lord submitting, or in combat slain;
And hold the subject region as their own,
Unmatch'd in power, and in command supreme.
This plan conceived, the close deviser deem'd
Th' occasion ripe, for opening to a few
Its fraudful purpose, while exhorting all
To seize the happy instant, and allow
No time for thought to form insidious schemes;

But by incessant action, to complete
The work now nearly finish'd, and employ
The force of either host to win their prize.
BIG with this fell intent, he call'd aside
His chosen friends, and anxious to disclose
His hope, as if his subtle mind foresaw
What scheme Androgeus might conceive; appear'd
In act to speak; when lo! the warriour came
In sight! serene of aspect, yet resolved
He seem'd. All gazed in silence, as he trode
The dome with firm demeanour. Vortiger
Awed by his presence, sat, yet eyed the Chief
With cloudy brow askance, afraid to hear
What might ensue. The God-like leader stood
Amidst his rude compeers, and thus began:
'KING of a mighty race, and ye who hold
'Beneath your Prince inferiour rule; attend,
'What prudent care suggests, and love of man:
'First of ourselves, exposed to other ills
'Than foes inflict; more fatal, and when spread
'Abroad, remediless; which wisdom calls
'To ward.—On yonder field, so late the scene
'Of war, and fight, a slaughter'd heap remains
'Of either host, of funeral rites deprived:
'The brave who fell with honour, and the slave,
'Who trembling sunk within his covert, share
'One fate; alike they lie unknown;—alike

'The corse exposed and wasting, taints the winds,
'That waft each noxious scent, with rank disease
'And seeds of future death.—To those who feel
'No pity, pleading for the great in arms
'Low-laid, for courage even in foes, that scorn'd,
'Placed on the verge of instant fate, to breathe
'By mean submission; yet a just desire
'To save our offspring's lives, or guard our own
'From ills that conquer all, will prompt the heart
'To seek from warlike toils a short release,
'Till in the dust our mighty dead repose,
'Or feed the funeral flame; and while we act
'A deed so grateful to our own, 'tis meet,
'Yon adverse host should mingle on the field
'With ours in peace; all in one solemn work
'Employ'd, so pleasing to the Power Supreme.
'YIELD not to anger, Lords; for on your brows
'I mark the lowering passion; let the voice
'Of whispering nature, plead in every heart
'The cause of human kind. The task be mine,
'Empower'd already by the Albian host,
'To bear, with your consent, the general voice
'Of our assembled Chieftains, to the foe.'

THUS veiling from his barbarous mates, the charge
Trigontes bore, the prudent Chief essay'd,
To work, by means of universal power,
His secret purpose: but the monarch broke

Ere yet the others spoke dissent, abrupt,
In words that breathed of fury, on his ear.
'Gods! when we conquer, when their last retreat
'Conceals the trembling herd, that meet no more
'In open fight our prowess;—shall we grant
'Release from toil, with new-born strength to brace
'Their hands, and hearts, again prepared for war?
'And *Thou*, descended of a race divine,
'Art *Thou* their pleader?—Warriour, mark my words.
'Amidst *our* mighty dead, of *theirs*, my soul
'Disdains remembrance; though Leontia's corse
'Yet lies unburied, and her spirit knows
'No rest; I yield not to the voice, that bids
'To grace with funeral rites, her last remains,
'Ere from the land we drive a race abhorr'd,
'Now hid behind their mounds. One day completes
'The work. I see with morn the battle rage!
'I see the arm, that pierced a female heart,
'Quivering in bloody dust! Unite your powers,
'Ye sons of Neptune, with the native bands
'Of Albion, safe behind Androgeus' shield;
'With night we conquer, and possess the spoil;
'With morn perform the rest.'—The giant King
Thus spoke, while anger, ill by dread repell'd,
Flash'd from his rolling eye-balls. His fierce mates
Heard with approving looks: but ere they gave
Their thoughts free utterance, Albion's Lord arose

Calm, yet incensed; and temperate, thus replied:

'KNOW, ye the leaders of unconquer'd bands,
'In native strength unmatch'd, in power supreme!
'If to your monarch's voice ye give th' assent
'Your eyes announce, ye meet yon host alone.
'Already, to their Prince, our purpose stands
'Disclosed: an Herald with the mandate charged,
'Ere this has brought the not unwelcome tale;
'To rest from fight, till Phœbus has perform'd
'Four times his course in heaven. That space we yield
'To holy rites, and offices that please
'Th' unbodied spirit, then dismiss'd to peace,
'Nor more a partner of each mortal care.
'With morn, if ye approve, we seek the field
'Unarm'd. The strangers, if I judge aright,
'Will seize that signal, and unite in works
'Of pious duty to the slain: the care
'Be mine to warn you, should their general voice
'Deny consent.—Meantime let wisdom guide
'Your course, by reason, not by rage design'd.'

HE ceased, and turning, from th' assembly moved
In act to part, while gloomy silence reign'd
O'er all; when Vortiger, who saw his thought
Confirm'd, yet wish'd not by constraint to drive
The Chief to desperate, and declared revolt,
Stood in his path. Ev'n then his mind devised
Means to effect his purpose, from an act

That seem'd to menace uproar, and a train
Of ills, with lowering destiny behind.
Hence, with deceitful words, that won the heart
To melt, though fenced with adamant, he gain'd
From all compliance; veiling, while he seem'd,
Between contending powers, to hold the scales
In equal poise, his secret hope; he brought
Even dire Gerontes, growling, to confirm
The truce; and inly-smiling, as his thought
Enjoy'd its meditated breach, beheld
With heart appeased, Androgeus seek his own.

MEANWHILE, the Princes of the hostile bands
Met, as great Brutus gave command, to judge
Of what the time required. Humbled they met,
Dejected, fall'n: their monarch now apprised
Of all the Spartan knew, indulged no hope,
Save what the sacred Minister inspired,
Yet hid beneath a chearful smile, the heart
That mourn'd in secret. O'er the field, he cast
His eye, then sighing, mark'd the heaps of dead
Deprived of funeral honours, and exposed
To beasts, or foes of fiercer kind, that bore
The human form. He weighed in thought, the means
To gain some interval of rest from toil,
Not without hope to win the Albian powers,
With their great ruler, to his side, while yet
That calm prevail'd. He fear'd to meet the rage,

And scorn of fierce Gerontes, should he send
To him a messenger, empower'd to talk
Not of deliverance, but of rest from fight,
Even with the noblest end. Androgeus rose
With better hope, before him; yet he wish'd
To learn what other warriours might propose
Of counsel suited to the time. Nor long
He stood suspended, when his guards announced,
While yet the Chiefs explored with anxious hearts
Their state, and reason'd various of the theme,
A stranger's near approach, in peaceful guise,
From Albion's host. Trigontes, as they spoke,
Came on; the peaceful symbol in his hand,
An ensign grateful to th' assembled throng.
At once the Spartan knew, at once embraced
His friend, who standing in the midst, address'd
Bland words, by all with joyful hearts received:

'KNOW, Princes, (thus he spoke) the mighty Lord
'Of Albion's native race to me consigns
'A pleasing task. He deems release from war
'A needful pause for pious works, that claim
'The care of either host. Hence, should ye yield
'Consent, by me ye hear Androgeus speak.
'He grants, to grace with funeral rites the slain,
'Four days, then opening, when ye mark at morn,
'Our Albian numbers spread along the field,
'Unarm'd, employ'd in pious rites, approved

'Alike of Gods, and men. Nor, if his voice
'Succeed, shall fell Gerontes with his peers
'Withhold consent; nor with new wounds deface
'The foes that fell with honour on the plain.
'Amid this interval of rest from arms,
'Some plan well-framed, may be devised, to bid
'The rage of battle cease; or in close league,
'Establish concord by superiour power.
'SUCH are Androgeus' words, nor does his heart
'Disclaim their purpose. Mine exults to meet
'The friends I left so late, the generous friends,
'Who made their captive free, and bless'd with means
'To serve a kindred race, with joy beheld.'
THUS while the warriour spoke, reviving hope
Beam'd in each eye: even Brutus felt its sway;
Yet locking in his breast the glad surmise,
He heard assenting, what the stranger said,
Then to his loved companions gave in charge
Their guest, to share of hospitable cares,
Ere yet dismiss'd to join his native bands.
WHAT time he parted, every duty paid
That spoke him favour'd, and beloved; the Chief
Thus, to Trigontes, ere he sought his own,
Call'd from the busy croud apart, began:
'WARRIOUR, though here thou seest an host pre-
'For each extreme of peril, yet we lift (pared
The shield reluctant, and with grief survey

'The havock of the sword. Hence, while we raised
'Against Gerontes, and his barbarous crew
'Our hands, compell'd in just defence; we hoped
'With you to form alliance; as we stand
'The same in arms, and of ferocious deeds
'Alike abhorrent. To your Prince, impart
'From me this message.—Brutus trusts his faith,
'Accepts his offer'd truce: and ere the sun
'Four times on yonder arch perform his round,
'Will treat by chosen messengers, of league
'With Albion's leaders, and of means, to bring
'By force, the jarring nations to repose.'

THUS he; nor aught the Albian Chief replied,
But turning, sought Androgeus, while his friends
Convey'd him on his course, and soon rejoin'd,
Beneath the moon's directing light, his powers.

NOT sooner morn's effulgent eye illumed
Th' aerial void, than from the field, so late
O'erspread with hostile bands, the numbers throng'd
Along the plain, unarm'd; the giant race,
Though inly-murmuring, yet as Albion's host
Prepared for pious acts; when Brutus gave
Command, by funeral honours, to release
The shades, yet wailing near the Stygian bank,
From fate's inexorable power, and please,
By prayer and holy rites, the Gods of hell;
That borne in safety to the farther shore,

The soul might join, in Pluto's drear domain,
Its kindred minds.—Meanwhile, on either side
All ceased from hostile deeds. And now, the camp
Pour'd forth its thousands to the plain, secure
In their great monarch's care. They bore aloft
The honour'd dead, and decent, on the pile
Disposed with solemn forms, their loved remains;
Nor ceased, till night descending, bade them leave
The pleasing task, again with morn resumed
On either part; for nature's powerful voice
Impress'd, on savage hearts, her general law.

Two days, and two succeeding nights, revolved
In peace; nor now th' offensive heaps of dead
O'erspread a length of space, nor more was heard,
Save on its utmost skirts, the mourner's wail;
When now fell Azrael, fearful of th' event,
And weighing in his thought, whate'er might tend
To ward unprosperous fate; to Belial, thus
Sunk in the cavern's deepest shade, began:

'Say, thou in perils tried, and versed in guile!
'What deem'st thou, friend, of this suspicious calm,
'This interval of deep, and fixt repose?
'Our mightiest, shunning yet th' Eternal's eye,
'In his own shape, awaits in still suspense,
'Some great event to call him to the field.
'Meanwhile, to us he leaves inferiour means;
'Nor, while we see th' angelic tribe restrain'd

'By Heaven from acting; wills, when all is still,
'To rouse the thunderer's ire; to me, his thoughts
'Are known.—With morn the Trojan Prince resolves
'Even now, to meet Androgeus: be it ours
'To hold the Chiefs remote, and wake the war.
'Tell what thy mind suggests, of force to gain
'This mighty purpose. Every moment calls
'To seize th' occasion, once, and ever gone.'

To him, the brother fiend: 'My thought, as thine,
'Points to immediate deeds. But yonder power,
'Leagued with heaven's minstrel train, o'erlooks the field
'So close, no covert scapes her watchful eye.
'Say, may we touch Gerontes' vengeful soul
'Unseen; and, furious as he is, excite
'In his resentful heart, the lust of blood;
'Or rouse Romerus slumbering in his ire?
'Stir thou the Monarch, while the time remains,
'To deeds of death, and in Romerus' breast,
'Be mine the task to pour destructive fires!
'Thus may we baffle, what those Chiefs contrive
'To save from death, yon else devoted prey.'

Thus, while the hell-born pair in secret held
Dire parle, by him, th' Apostate King o'er-rul'd,
Yet unperceived; Gerontes slept on earth,
Girt with his giant mates; a crew, that struck
Dread to the heart, when even in sleep beheld,
So fierce their aspect. In the deep suspense

Of care, they gain'd new vigour, to begin
Rude scenes of tumult, with the rising dawn.
As near the lion's haunt, when by his prey
Half-torn, the desart's shagged King reclines
Gorged with his spoil, the fox in silence creeps,
Lured by the scent of carnage, to devour
The scatter'd offals, or with parent care
Convey some welcome morsel to his young;
Thus to Gerontes came th' insidious fiend,
In shape, as she whom Camber's fateful dart
Stretch'd on the field: her shatter'd chest unveil'd
Yet seem'd to labour, as when life maintain'd
Its seat, though rudely shock'd: her mouth discharged
Black blood, and from her rolling eye-balls, flash'd,
Though trembling in their orbs, their wonted fires.
While yet the father, gazing as entranced,
Dwelt on her form, she frown'd, and thus began:
'UNHAPPY monarch of ill-fated hosts,
'Awake!—Th' opponents, deem'd for ever quell'd,
'Acquire new strength, and while thou sleep'st, prepare
'For fight: their mightiest, from his foes released,
'I see with terrour arm'd, and pale dismay,
'Scattering inevitable fate!—Ere yet
'I leave thee; know, the scenes of good or ill,
'That wait at future periods to evolve,
'Mark'd with thy destiny; will cease to touch
'This heart, for ever lost to mortal care,

'When parting hence. Even now, I hear the voice
'Of dire *Necessity*, that calls,—"Away!"
'Even now th' attendant spirits spread their wings
'To reach a void abyss, for ever barr'd
'From human intercourse! My latest words
'Observe!—"With all thy powers renew the war!"

THUS spoke the Shade, and shrieking, on the wind
Dissolved at once in air. Gerontes heard,
And fired with hell-born fury, as the fiend
Work'd his strong passions to their last extreme;
Sprung madding from his couch, and call'd thy name,
Leontia! Startling at the sound, his mates
Rush'd to his aid at once. A shout they raised
So loud, that all the forest swell'd the voice
Afar re-echoing, and the vales around.

MEANWHILE, Romerus, as the giant King
Deem'd to awake that Chieftain, and the band
Who shared his counsels, came, as he, prepared
To mix in direful battle.—O'er his couch,
When slumb'ring, Belial spread a scene of woe.
For lo! the spirit of his son, so late
Who fell beside him, strode aghast, and pale
To sight, with livid lips, and death-set eyes!
The vital current welling from his breast,
And groan resounding through the void, appall'd
The father's heart: the mother, while he gazed,
A consort once beloved, approach'd in view!

No words the parent spoke, but waved her hand
O'er him, yet reeking as it seem'd with gore;
Then show'd her mangled offspring, and withdrew
Low wailing! At the sight, Romerus broke
From rest, and seizing in his rage the mace
So dreaded, sought in haste Gerontes' dome.

As meet, on Dàghistan's unmeasured height,
Black clouds, whose shade within its skirt, involves
Afar the Caspian; such the pair that met
Lowering, and dark. Each deem'd, that kindred thoughts
Inspired his great compeer; and as they told
What cause awaked the fell desire of war,
Each hoped the ruin of his foes:—but one
Blind rage inspired; while one, indignant ire,
Revenge, and giant might, that scorn'd control,
Rough, but unshaken fortitude, and pain
Such as the lion feels, who seeks his young,
And roars in anguish to the waste, impell'd.

Glad of a welcome concourse, that announced
Some chance propitious to his guileful scheme,
Unsleeping Vortiger arose, and sought
The kingly presence; from the croud he call'd
The mightier pair apart; then heard their tale
With thoughtful eye, and pondering, thus began:

'Prince of imperial Neptune's Godlike race,
'And thou, the bulwark of our host in fight;
'I curse, as you, the truce that holds our hands

'From war. But know, ye Chiefs, our greatest foes
'Lie, if I judge aright, in yonder tents,
'Where Albion's numerous host o'erspreads the field,
'And our associate rules. In him, I dread
'An hollow friend, who sought release from arms,
'Perhaps to join the strangers, and assail,
'What time in secret intercourse they fix
'Their league, our numbers with united war.
'HEAR then attentive, what my thought suggests,
'To blast their half-form'd purpose, and secure
'As friends, a warlike power that scorns control.
'While yet the lingering night extends her shade
'O'er all, select some champion tried in guile,
'And resolute of heart; to him consign
'The charge, to steal in silence on the tents
'Where now th' unheeding Albians rest in peace,
'And marking, where the nearest paths adjoin
'The hostile camp, command him there to spread
'The rage of slaughter o'er the sleeping train.
'At last, when ceasing, bid him leave the *sword*,
'(Not *mace*) that wrought the bloody act, behind,
'And unperceived, rejoin his native peers.
'Hence, when the morn shall clear to every eye
'The deed of night, each Albian hero roused,
'Will hold the foreign warriours, as the hands
'That wrought an act so foul, and seek revenge,
'With one consenting voice; and, while their host

'Rest in their tents unmindful, let us burst
'The mounds that guard them from assault, and whelm
'In death, a weak and unresisting throng!'
WHILE thus the giant counsell'd, as the fiend
Of hell inspired him, various passions sway'd
The pair who listened. In Gerontes' heart,
The fire that fiercely raged, forbade delay;
Of all unmindful, but the shade that late
Stood at his pillow unrevenged, he wish'd
On Camber's guilty head to waste his rage,
Nor other thought alarm'd him. But his mate,
In soul exalted as in deeds, beheld
With high disdain, the prompter of an act
So base. He eyed him scornful, and replied:
'FROM me, the scene that courts the midnight gloom
'Be far!—I break the battle's perilous edge,
'In day's bright eye; and of Androgeus' ire,
'And Albion's sons unheedful, stand prepared
'To meet in open fight an adverse host,
'Not circumvent by guile. If thou approvest,
'Chief of our kind, the fraudful scheme; commit
'The trust in charge to some inferiour hand
'Tried and approved. I move not in the cause.'
HE said, and strode indignant from the place,
Not deigning parle. Gerontes stood o'erawed
A moment, but his sly adviser roused
The latent passion in his heart, and fired

With hope of vengeance. O'er his kind, he cast
A searching glance, and singled from the whole
One, secret, vengeful, cunning, uninform'd
With mind, but keen to stab a prostrate foe;
Cambus his name. Him, yielding glad consent,
Not without promise of reward, to crown
So great an action, if perform'd with care,
And watchful secresy; he gave a sword,
Gain'd from a prostrate foe, to do the work
Of death, and bade to leave it in the corse
Of his last victim, sheathed, with strenuous hand.

'Twas now the hour, when salutary rest
To toil's relaxed joints restores the spring
They lost. A death-like silence still'd the throng,
But late so busy, when the murderer held
His course to Albion's camp, where yet the hand
Of hell's dread monarch fix'd in deep repose
Each warriour's eye; and cast a gathering mist
Around the host, that scarce the lunar beam
Play'd on its spreading tents. The guard, alone
Wakeful, along his solitary round
Paced with slow step; yet unsuspicious, dream'd
Not then of foes profess'd, or secret guile.

As when the flocks that roam the verdant lawn,
Coop'd in their folds, lie musing, till the dews
Of slumber seal their eyes; while yet in dreams,
Again they brouze along the yellow hill,

And hear the shepherd's reed, and see the lamb
Light-leaping round them; on their rest, intrudes
The wily fox, and meditates to gorge
His maw with guiltless blood; just where the turf
Hangs loose, and broken, at a bound he springs
Aloft, and darting rapid on his prey,
Around him heaps the dead: the giant, thus
Close by the rampart, rear'd in haste to shade
The sleeping numbers, held his course unseen,
And pass'd the hollow fosse. At hand, he heard
The watchman's step, and treading slow, drew near
Behind, and stretch'd, with well-directed aim,
The man, who dream'd not of approaching ill,
On earth. The weapon reach'd his heart. He groan'd,
And breathed his parting spirit into air.

Opposed to Camber's hardy bands, that lined
Th' ascent, thy troops, Abrocomes, o'erspread
Afar the plain beneath. Stern Cambus, here
Moved like the minister of fate, to glut
His heart with slaughter; thus from tent to tent,
Led by the gleam of half-extinguish'd fires,
He scatter'd ruin. Strymon, in his dream
Match'd with the strength of Camber, as he laid
That Chief in dust, and in his bosom plunged
The sword relentless, felt the weapon tear
His throat, and writhed in death. Abractes turn'd,
While fate hung o'er him, and the faulchion aim'd

At his broad breast, deep-piercing through the side,
Sunk to the seat of breath. Proud Dorax next,
And stern Hycanthus bled; no groan awaked
Their friends, so just each well-directed blow.
THUS heaping, in his walk, the field with dead,
The giant strode, and reach'd at last the place
Of great Abrocomes, renown'd in war.
Already morn's effulgent eye illumed
Afar the blushing orient, when he spied
The leader's tent, conspicuous where it stood,
And raised above the rest. The murderer paused
A moment, dubious to advance, when now
Th' approaching dawn recall'd him, or to strike
One mighty victim, and retire! At last,
Resolved to crown by some distinguish'd deed
His work, he enter'd where the Chief reclined.
SPREAD on his couch supine, the man was lost
In death-like rest; on either side, a friend
Lay near the bed, defenceless, and exposed
To each invader's power. The ruthless hand
Approach'd, and ere it reach'd Abrocomes,
Sheath'd in Dubinus' breast, the pointed steel,
Who groan'd, and writhed in death. Unsated yet
With blood, he eyed the Chief, and stretch'd his hand,
Inured to deeds of horrour, and prepared
For one decisive stroke: but by the corse
Encumber'd as he struck, the weapon raised

To pierce the warriour's heart, diverging, razed
His side, and waked him. With a voice that roused
His living friend, he call'd, and seized the sword
Light-springing upwards, ere it wrought his fall.
As when a thief, on some inviting hoard
Intent, who cautious, watchful, and secure,
Slides from his hold at midnight, unperceived,
And slowly-stealing, opens every ward
Unheard;—when now he grasps the precious chest,
Through many a peril sought, and poising, lifts
The welcome burden; as he seeks the door,
Sudden, the surly mastiff from his stand
Breaks out, and shakes the long-resounding halls
With deep-toned thunder. From the plunderer's gripe
Prone drops the prize; he slinks in haste away,
Glad, should he scape conceal'd: the giant, thus,
The weapon left behind him, fled appall'd,
Eager, to join unseen his kindred band.
'Twas instant tumult now: Abrocomes
Roused all around, and gave command, to drag
To light the author of so foul a deed;
For now the solar radiance half-dispell'd
The mist; nor had the busy search been vain,
But that th' infernal monarch wrapt his charge
In clouds impervious, and convey'd, by close
And secret paths, unheeded to his friends.
Meanwhile the Albian rulers, all awaked,

Around their leader throng'd; intent to learn
What wrought such wide commotion. All beheld
The deed with horrour, but what hands perform'd
The bloody work, no messenger declared,
Though from the field, each flitting moment saw
Some just arrived. A band that scour'd the vales,
Even till the Trojan ramparts barr'd approach,
Declared how vain their search; that not the trace
Of one light foot had brush'd the silver dew;
That o'er the strangers' camp no mark appear'd
Of fraud, or violence; but all around
Breathed of security and peace. The Chiefs
Paused as they heard, uncertain where to fix
The crime; but soon Abrocomes dispell'd
Their doubt: on earth he cast the faulchion, stain'd
With recent blood; and thus incensed began:

'Look on that instrument of death, by me
'Wrench'd from the murderer, in the direful act,
'Though screen'd within the shading tent, from view,
'And learn what monsters, void of truth, unaw'd
'Even by th' Eternal's thunder, violate
'Their faith, so firmly pledged!—It nought avails,
'When Heaven reveals th' advisers, how the tool
'They chose, was hither brought, or hence convey'd.
'To arms, ye Chiefs of Albion; let the sword
'Avenge your slaughter'd kindred, not in night;
'But meet your foes, beneath the flaming noon,

'In open war. Meantime, proclaim the truce
'Dissolved, by heralds in their ears; and join
'Once more our late companions on the field.'
As to the rays of Phœbus, when they struck
Thy statue, Jove, in famed Dodona's fane,
The tremulous brass resounded; (such the tale
Of ancient song) thus thrill'd to every heart
The keen desire of vengeance. Segonax,
Still hostile to the stranger race, who deem'd
Their Chieftains robbers, and their bands, an host
Alone intent on plunder, echoed loud
The call of war and vengeance. But their Prince,
Who knew his old companions, and the fraud
Of wily Vortiger, was ever prone
To doubt: hence, when the herald met his sight,
He gave command to mark, while he announced
Of fight and fierce defiance; how the foe
Received their message, and with patience, hear
What clear'd their monarch from so foul a stain.
With Albion thus, while every scene bespoke
Approaching war, the Trojan host, secure
Slept in their camp, at ease. Alone, their Chief,
The cares, in sleep that broke his restless dream,
Soon roused. Arising with the glimmering dawn,
He strode in arms, and listening on the height,
Heard roll'd along the deep and solemn void,
Sounds as of hostile semblance. Soon, the lights

Struck out in haste, and spreading o'er the vale
Beneath, alarm'd him; as on shields, he mark'd
The dim ray gliding, and each moment, knew
The tumult gathering, and approaching near.

THOUGH stunn'd, ere yet the prudent Prince convened
The leaders of his host, he sought the mound
Opposed to Albion's powers; and met the guard,
Whose voice of peril told: anon he heard
Some speeding messenger's approach. He stood
Alarm'd; then turning gave command, to guide
To him the stranger from each harm secure.

MEANTIME, the guardian of the land, whose eye
O'erlook'd the scene, and kept the hell-born pair
Still close in sight; while Brutus stay'd afar,
Passing from tent to tent with busy feet,
In form a soldier, with his Lord's command,
Call'd to the sovereign's tent each Prince to meet
With haste, in council. Hence the monarch found
His peers in order rank'd, whom yet he deem'd
Of danger unapprised. He heard amazed,
What all declared; then with up-lifted eyes;
'I hail, great Jove, the signal, (thus he cried)
'That tells thy favouring voice! 'Twas thy desire,
'Not mine, this herald bore; nor him I deem
'Of mortal race, but from th' Olympian height,
'Some God commission'd, as thou gavest decree!'

WHILE thus great Brutus spoke, and touch'd with joy

Each throbbing heart, in sight the Albian came,
Charged with Androgeus' words: unlike the guest
So late dismiss'd with honour, he approach'd
With solemn gait. The sceptre graced his hand;
The locks time-hallow'd, o'er his shoulders spread,
That seem'd to tremble, by no breath impell'd,
Commanded reverence; yet his brow announced
Unwelcome sounds. He spoke with lowering eye:

'Thus to a race that violate their faith,
'To midnight robbers, on the camp that break,
'Fired with the lust of plunder, and of blood,
'To stab their victims, in the silent hour
'Of rest, with coward hearts, and ruthless hands;
'By me Androgeus speaks. I give your oaths,
'Ye dire deceivers, to the winds! The blood
'Ye shed by night, in Albion's sleeping host,
'Awakes the thunder. Know, Androgeus comes,
'By nature's Lord commission'd, to chastise
'Your impious deed; his numbers stand in arms
'Prepared for fight. The sword he deem'd so late
'Discharged, or doom'd in your behalf, perhaps,
'To spread destruction, turns against the hands,
'It meant to strengthen. Yet we scorn to creep
'In silence to revenge, and bid the night
'Cast her dark mantle o'er our trembling spears.
'We yield you space for battle, and advance
'To meet your force beneath the blaze of day.'

As when the mariner, who holds his course
From bleak Fuego, to the blissful Isles
That shade the temperate main; o'erspent with toil,
And worn with watching, and disease, beholds
At hand an Eden, mantled in a cloud
Of sweets, whose fragrance scents the fanning gale;
Just when he quaffs the palm's refreshing juice
In thought, or drains the cocoa, or devours
The salutary herbs, profusely spread
Along the lawns that smile with living green;
Should then his vessel strike the *coral reef*
That guards the treasure; what amaze he feels,
Was thine, great Brutus!—On the throng around
He gazed one anxious moment, ere he spoke:
But soon collecting courage, from their bold
And free demeanour, with the noble pride
That conscious virtue prompts, he thus replied:

'HENCE to your master, Priest, and thus report
'The charge of Brutus. If, beneath the guise
'Of tales by fancy feign'd, he seeks to break
'The truce, and longs to spread the rage of war;
'Say, that howe'er averse to stain the field
'Again with human blood, the Trojan Prince
'Will meet his host in arms; for with an heart,
'That seeks to violate by false pretence
'What *Truth* confirms, whoe'er reveres her laws,
'Holds not alliance. Hence, he casts aside

'His foul reproach indignant, and expels
'The new-born friendship from his breast:—but mark
'The rest! If *real*, not *imagined* ill
'Has hither brought thy step; if Albion's bands
'Have bled by treacherous foes, beneath the shade
'Of night; may Jove's avenging thunder blast
'The guilty head! we stand exempt from blame:
'Nor through yon gates, barr'd when the setting sun
'Forbade to labour, has one wanderer stray'd
'To mark, far less to stab with guileful thought
'Calm unsuspecting victims, in their hour
'Of sleep, by oaths, and mutual league secure.'

He ceased. The Herald half-abash'd, beheld
Amaze in every face. He felt the power
Of truth, and thus with gentler accent said:

'Forbear, great monarch, if my words betray
'Weak, or unjust suspicion; to accuse
'Our Chief of fraudful purpose, or intent
'To break his league, so late with you design'd.
'Know, that some hostile band, when silence reign'd
'O'er all the camp, amid the darkness, spread
'A scene of blood o'er yonder tents, that stand
'The first in sight: nor of a race unknown
'He seem'd; when with an ill-directed aim,
'He waked one mighty Prince, and from his grasp
'Retired, he left the sword in dread behind.
'Look on the weapon, Chiefs, behold the gore

'Yet staining its keen edge! 'Twas this perform'd
'The deed accursed; survey it, and pronounce
'Of him who wrought the act, yourselves disclaim!'
He said, and held the blade, with purple tinged,
In his right hand, aloft. With wonder, all
Gazed on the bloody sign; but Camber knew,
Or deem'd he knew, its master. From his seat
He sprung in haste, and snatching from the Priest
The faulchion, mark'd it with a searching eye.
At last he dash'd it sudden on the ground,
And thus indignant:—'Gods! (the hero cried)
'Tis young Philantes' sword, who met so late
'Leontia's fury in unequal fight,
'Whose fall this arm avenged. Gerontes bore
'The youth's rent spoils in triumph, with the corse
'Of his own offspring, from the field. What chance,
'Or fate decreed the weapon's farther use,
'It fits your wisest, Herald, to divine.'
Thus he: nor aught th' assembled train replied.
Revolving each in thought th' eventful scene,
Deep silence held them pondering.—From his seat,
At last the Prince of Lesbia's sons arose
In act to speak; he raised his thoughtful eyes
From earth, and stretch'd his aged arm abroad;
But while he stood, a deafening shout was heard
Without; the roar of meeting hosts, and borne
On every wind, the shout of long acclaim.

Amid the sounds, Locrinus' name was heard
From mingling voices. All impatient, rush'd
As with one spirit, from the tent. They cast
Their eyes abroad, when lo! the MAN DIVINE,
Girt with a stranger band, again appear'd,
Splendent in flaming mail! From the black wood
He burst, like Cancer, when his fiery hair
Shakes living sparkles through the night: Before
His breast, Zelohim spread th' ethereal shield,
And on his plumes, amid the solar blaze
That waved with trembling radiance, terrour sat,
Appalling every heart!—He mark'd the sons
Of Albion arm'd for fight, and in their front
Beheld his native troops, from him disjoin'd
By interposing hosts, and coop'd within
Their camp inglorious. O'er the field, he raised
His voice. All Albion turning, caught the sound
So known, and shrunk before him, as he came!

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK XIX.—

THE ARGUMENT.

LOCRINUS, having gone to the right, after his return, to maintain the battle against the Giants, the war is carried on in the other wing, rather by the followers of BRUTUS and ANDROGEUS, than by those Leaders; of whom, the latter is still suspicious of treachery on the part of GERONTES. In the mean time, SEGONAX, hitherto the enemy of the TROJANS, is rendered their friend by ALBANUS, who overcomes, and generously spares him. At the instant, when promises of friendship pass between them, both are called to attend upon ANDROGEUS, who is now convinced by the return of the Herald, of the treachery of his pretended associates, although ignorant of the traitor. While the fight is suspended by these circumstances on one side, LOCRINUS carries all before him on the right. The moment of GERONTES' fate now approaching, the traitor CAMBUS is wounded at his side by LOCRINUS. He is spared, upon promising to make an important discovery: but GERONTES presaging the ruin of his party, from the information which he would give to ANDROGEUS, is withheld only by SATAN, at the time when he sees him led away captive, from opposing LOCRINUS. The guardian spirit of BRITAIN meets the infernal Monarch, in consequence of a celestial command; and compels him to retire. GERONTES now rushes forward, and is stopped by LOCRINUS. SATAN wraps him in darkness. LOCRINUS plunges into the shade. The combat, as witnessed by the Genius of the island, is described. At the moment when the darkness is dispelled, ROMERUS having arrived, sees GERONTES stretched upon the field. LOCRINUS having commanded a messenger to carry the news to BRUTUS, beholds the Giants flying on all sides, and prepares to follow them to their fortress.

THE sun now mounting on th' ethereal void,
Illumin'd heaven and earth; when on th' expanse
Beneath, the guardian of the Isle arranged
The tribe celestial, o'er an army form'd

For instant fight; and brandish'd, as she sail'd
On air, refulgent in the flaming van,
The sword so tried, and dreaded. Mortal eyes
Mark'd not the power, but each exulting heart
Confess'd her influence. Azrael knew her gait
Appall'd; and thus to Moloch, as he moved
Through his fell mates, in haste:—'Friend, in th' approach
'Of yonder band, so late that left the field,
'And from yon conquering Chief, beyond our hope
'Return'd, I dread a perilous fight, and rout,
'If hell's great King withhold not, in its course,
'Th' impending storm, of hosts with ours allied.
'Thou then, while yet our leader stands aloof,
'Maintain Androgeus firm; while I support,
'Against yon warriour, and the sons of heaven
'That give him aid, Gerontes, and his train;
'Thither he bends his course.'—He said, and sought
The right, with Belial, and a subject race
Of fiends, obsequious to his call. His mate
With Ramiel leagued, o'erlook'd th' auxiliar bands.

But o'er Gerontes', and Androgeus' war,
So late elate and boastful, deep dismay
Prevail'd. By terror half-subdued, they stood,
What time they mark'd with dizzy eyes, the tread
Of great Locrinus, in himself divine;
With strangers now inclosed, of force unknown,
And looking stern defiance; every heart,

Even thine, Romerus, sunk, though pride restored
Its powers, assail'd by heaven and earth, in vain.
MEANWHILE, the hero, like a whirlwind, burst
On Albion's host, that interposing barr'd
The path to Brutus: but on either side
The numbers opening, gave him space to hold
His course direct: nor stay'd the Chief to spread
Destruction in his rout, but join'd his sire,
And friends that hail'd him as their guardian power.
As when the throng assembled to receive,
From Acapulco launch'd, the treasured ore
That loads an annual ship; o'erspread thy coast,
Manilla, longing for th' expected hoard
In eager thought enjoy'd; from morn to eve,
Roaming the margin of the main, they climb
The cliff, to mark when parting from the cloud,
Th' aerial pendant streaming on the wind;
Just when it peers conspicuous, and the crew
Announce in triumph to the throng beneath,
The ship's approach; when now the vessel stands
In sight, slow heaving on the swelling wave;
What joy her owners feel, what shouts proclaim
A nation's gratulating voice, received
The Trojan Chief: all eyed him as a God,
And deem'd, beneath his conquering arm secure,
Their force invincible. Each raised aloft
The sword, and saw the hour of vengeance near.

Nor, on the stranger troop, of warlike port,
Who form'd Locrinus' train, the Trojans gazed
Less pleased, yet wondering whence they held their course.
Their spears, their axes, and their poniards short,
For closer fight prepared, alternate fix'd
Their sight. A brawny race, of courage tried
They seem'd, though not in number, yet in force,
And aspect, great. Surrounding as a guard
The Prince high-prized, they own'd his sovereign sway.

Stung, as he scann'd the field, and guess'd what rout
Had whelm'd an host, who trode the distant plain
So late, as victors; indignation swell'd
The hero's mighty heart. No time remain'd
For talk; the tumult on the right, declared
The battle join'd, though yet Androgeus held
His Albian bands from action; still in hope,
To see his messenger return, with words
That might unveil, what yet remain'd obscured
By secret doubt. Meanwhile, the Trojan King
Thus, while he show'd the giant throng, bespoke
In few Locrinus:—'Thither bend thy course
'With speed. The greatest there contend in fight.
'Here, with the natives, and their mighty Prince,
'*We* meet in peaceful league, or cope in war.'

He ceased: nor aught replied the Man Divine,
But turning, waved his spear, and scour'd the field.

Ere this, the sons of Albion, all inspired

By thought of loved revenge, had rush'd amain
On Brutus' host, and Segonax the first,
Impell'd by hate and anger; but withheld
By him, the Chief they dreaded, and the doubt
Hid in his inmost heart, that kept the hand
Of their great ruler from the fight; they stood
As yet suspended; when the general shout
Announcing battle, stirr'd the latent fire
In every breast: without a sign, they flew
On either side to action; man to man
Opposed, and ardent for a warriour's prize.

URGED by their followers on, the leaders moved
To war reluctant; yet the sounds as wont
Of clashing shields, and dying warriours rose.

THOU worst of human plagues, destructive war,
Thou iron-hearted fury, deeply bathed
In blood, and feeding with unsated heart,
In thy dire walk, on carnage;—be thy rage
Accursed!—Accursed, the desolating hand
That wastes the earth! Accursed, the sword that strikes
The mother's panting bosom, through the heart
With her own life inform'd; and wakes the power
Of withering anguish in its seat, to fix,
On some dear mangled corse, her tearless eyes!

FIRST of the foe, indignant, and enraged,
Stern Segonax advanced: no more repell'd
By tidings, deem'd to breathe of dark deceit,

As those Trigontes bore; his native hate,
Of faithless tribes returning, braced his hand.
As bursts some river, o'er the mound that held
Its tide restrain'd, what time the gathering waves
O'ertop the feeble bulwark, or unhinge
Its base; the torrent rushing through the breach,
With force collected, as it rolls, improves
In strength; and wasting in its course, the fields,
Sweeps on impetuous to the main: the Chief
With new-born force, by indignation roused,
Thus broke the Trojan ranks, and clear'd a path
To his bold followers. Chromius met his arm
In vain.—'Ye spoilers, (thus he cried) who thirst
'For blood; receive the fate ye seek to spread,
'Thyself the first!'—The spear, while yet he spoke,
Descending, stretch'd the warriour on the field:
His helm the weapon pierced, and in the brain
Thrill'd as it stood. Death, instant death, released
The spirit, parting from the mortal scene.
Close by Adrastus' side, a Prince renown'd
In arms, the might of Corybantes, match'd
Whate'er opposed its way. Cassander fell
Beneath his hand, and Meta's panting heart
Met with a bound his javelin, ere it dropt
To rest. Trigontes, sighing as he mark'd
His friend on earth low-laid; approaching, raised
The shield, announcing vengeance. Memory

Recall'd his loved companion, now no more,
To his desponding thought. Resolved to gain
His arms, or snatch from fate his last remains,
Frowning he strode in sight, and dared his foe,
His mightier foe, to combat. At the call,
The Lyrnessean from his victim wrench'd
The reeking dart, and held aloft in air,
The blood-distilling point. Trigontes saw
At hand his great opponent, as the wolf,
A lion growling from his den. His heart
Recoil'd within him; shame forbade to shun
The fight, and fear, to stand it. Instant death
Hung o'er the Albian, inly now appall'd,
Though high in port, when Segonax forbade,
With threatening voice, the combat.—As he came,
The spear dismiss'd before him, struck the plumes
From Corybantes' helm, and quivering, sunk
In earth. He turn'd, and eyed an hero, clad
In brazen arms, whose aspect, as his voice,
Of bold defiance spoke, and mortal war.

As when the lordly bull, who gores in pride
Of might his fancied rivals, meets a wolf
Impell'd by raging hunger, to attack
Unequal prowess; when the mightier lowers
His head indignant, and his ample chest
Swells with black blood; while yet he eyes the foe,
Lashing his sides in madness, ere he mix

In strong encounter; when the lion's roar,
Just as he meets th' assailer, speaks at hand
The monarch of the waste, and strikes the tide
Back from his boiling heart: thus fared thy Chief,
Lyrnessus, when the God-like Albian stay'd
His course, and raised his sounding shield. He shrunk
Aghast; yet soon collecting with the time
His utmost force, he stood for fight prepared.

Now, front to front, the daring rivals tower'd
Opposed; Trigontes gave the warriour way,
Disdaining parle. From Corybantes' hand,
The forceful weapon flying, held its course
Direct, and through the Albian's batter'd shield,
And mail, deep-piercing, rased his side exposed:
He shrunk, yet stood uninjured. Turning quick,
The Prince indignant soon released the spear,
And raising high, had hurl'd it on the foe:
But onward, ere he struck, with fury rush'd
The God-like Lyrnessean, and embraced
His great opponent, with a sinewy arm
That seem'd in strength unmatch'd. Nor Segonax,
Thus caught, declined the combat, though he felt
His force repell'd; while struggling in the toil,
He freed his better hand, and unperceived,
Drew forth a dagger from his side; he mark'd
The joint, that to the plated mail unites
The helm, and shaken, yet collected, drove

With desperate hand, his weapon to the throat,
And reach'd a vital part. The foe recoil'd;
Prone dropt his arms, a purple torrent choak'd
His flitting breath, while backward as he reel'd,
And fell, his dream of conquest fled in air.

THIS seen, deep anguish touch'd Adrastus' heart.
He eyed his lost associate on the plain,
Stretch'd out in death; and sprung in haste to guard
His corse from insult, and secure his arms,
Else doom'd the conquerour's prize. His javelin, sent
Before him, quiver'd in the Albian's shield.
'Cease, (thus he cried) proud victor, and extol
'Thy fortune, not thy prowess: o'er a Chief
'In arms superiour far, some God confers
'A short-lived triumph. Thy mysterious will,
'Great Jove, what human thought discerns! Forbear
'To touch his arms, or with polluted hands
'Deform his loved remains.'—To him, with scorn,
The Prince of Albion:—'Know, perfidious, thee,
'And all thy proud compeers, who merit hate,
'And just contempt from each superiour mind,
'I prize in equal scale. These arms I claim
'By right of conquest; he who dares defend
'That vanquish'd leader, shares his fate!'—This said,
He dragg'd the corse indignant from the field.

BUT wary in his rage, Adrastus stay'd
With one strong hand, his course; and raised with one

His shield. Around the Chiefs, on either side,
Their subject bands assemble. From his place
Beside Androgeus, Moloch mark'd the fight,
And breathing spirit in each Albian heart,
Swell'd, as he moved, the shout, and ruled the throng.
MEANWHILE, Albanus, who suspended, stood
Close by the monarch's side, beheld the fray;
And through the croud, the Lyrnessean Prince
Adrastus toiling as in doubtful war.
In every vein, the youthful warriour felt
New life; Britannia's mighty Queen inspired
That hour his bounding heart. He tore a rock,
A mass unwieldy, from the soil, and poised
Aloft the fragment. As he burst along,
Tall, animated, graceful, clad in arms
That shone refulgent as he moved, he seem'd
Apollo rushing in his strength, to quell
The fierce Phlegyan King, whose madness drove
The suppliants back, who sought the Delphian fane;
What time the angry God by death avenged
The monarch's impious act. Arrived, he clear'd
A path, and eyeing Segonax, discharged
The ruin on his crest. That hour had seal'd
Thy fate, brave Albian, but the fiend repell'd
The meditated death, of half its power
Deprived. Yet hollow, clang'd beneath the shock
The Albian's helm, and staggering from his place,

While on his ear the roar of meeting hosts
Died faintly murmuring; down the leader fell,
As one in sleep fast-lock'd, whose sense the din
Of torrents lulls to rest. Yet not appall'd,
But roused to desperate deeds, his native bands
Led by Trigontes, held the corse inclosed
Secure from harm, and braved the force opposed.

As he, who travelling onward, meets the rage
Of turbid elements, with heart that bears
Their force unshaken, though the stormy North
In vain, to break his journey, casts abroad
The winds, in vain by rattling hail essays,
Or floods, to stop his course; yet should he meet,
Slow-spreading on th' aerial void, the cloud
With thunder fraught, the wary stranger hies
Back to the shade;—young Alban thus retired,
What time he saw th' assembled host so near,
And sought Adrastus' aid. Adrastus met
His bold compeer, rejoicing.—'Prince, (he cried)
'I see well-pleased, thy steadier thought o'ercome
'Thy youthful ardour. With united powers,
'Be ours the task to break yon black array,
'Nor dread th' event.'—Thus he: The gathering troops
Behind their Chiefs assail'd the Albian host,
And clear'd a path, resistless in their sway.

Meanwhile, great Segonax, reprieved from death,
And stunn'd, not wounded, rais'd his languid eyes,

And knew his former friends, and turning, view'd
Again the scene of fight. The demon gave
New vigour to his limbs. He rose, but saw
Once more Albanus: from Adrastus' charge
The Albian powers receding, left a space
Exposed, and vacant. Here the warriours met
In arms; but dread depress'd the hero's heart:
Subdued, but not abased, the man appear'd,
Nor sought by mean submission to preserve
A forfeit life; yet, on the ground, he cast
His sword, as yielding to the time; his head
Declined, in act he stood to speak, yet veil'd,
Not unperceived, the pang that shows the pride
Of inborn worth depress'd.—'The time forbids
'New trial, Prince'—Albanus stopt his words,
And forward darting, gave his proffer'd hand,
Sure pledge of amity.—'Receive, (he cried)
'Thy boon unask'd. With thee, and with a kind
'Arm'd as ourselves, the natives of the land,
'We mix in fight, reluctant.—Know, this heart
'Would claim thy friendship, leader, not thy life.
'War is the tyrant's minister, and rage
'For blood, the lust of lions, not of man.
'We lift the sword compell'd, but sheathe with joy
'The fatal engine, and sincere of soul,
'Demand alliance with a kindred race,
'As ours, in guile unversed. If thou approvest

'My friendship freely offer'd, pledge thine own.
'But know, whate'er thy choice, this arm no more
'Assails thy life. Nor bless'd with life alone
'Depart; but go, with liberty restored,
'As late Trigontes from this hand received
'That boon, the valued gifts be now thine own.'
AMAZE, while thus the blooming warriour spoke,
Held mute his Albian foe: till now, he deem'd
The stranger host a barbarous people, bent
On war, still thirsting with desire of blood,
And stain'd by perfidy. Trigontes' tale,
Half from his doubtful mind, erased the taint
Of dark suspicion; but the recent deed,
A deed of guilt, and horrour, soon recall'd
His ancient hate. Now other thoughts arose,
And thrill'd his yielding heart. 'Art thou, (he cried,
And seized his ready hand) 'the Chief so young
'In arms, who saved a brother, and restored
'Uninjured to his own?'—He paused, and eyed
The youth with fix'd regard.—'No! (thus he cried,
His inmost spirit roused, and all the man
Alive;) 'Twere impious of a race to judge,
'Thus mark'd by honourable deeds, thus own'd
'Thy purest offspring, virtue! as debased
'By treacherous acts, that speak the villain's hand:
'Fly hence, suspicious thought!—This heart accepts
'Thy friendship, Prince, and hopes, in league to join

'Our yet discordant hosts.'—He said, and cast
His eyes around, and wondering, saw the fight
Surceased. The troops on either side, appear'd
Around the sovereigns crouding, nor disposed
As late, in warlike semblance; even the bands
They led, though still at hand, from hostile deeds
Abstain'd. The Albian ruler eyed the scene,
Intent, and thus in haste—'Some great event
'Suspends the fight. Perhaps Androgeus meets,
'Even now in peaceful form, the Trojan King;
'And lo! they beckon our approach!—Away!'

LONG in an equal poise, while either part
Prevail'd alternate here, the monarchs held
The fight suspended. Brutus, ere in arms
He met his great opponent, gave command
To guard the Priest returning; and assign'd
A troop to guide him through the storm of war,
Even to the camp of Albion. This perform'd,
He moved reluctant to the field, nor wish'd
To cope in fight with nations, deem'd so late
Allied; or meet their leader, as a foe,
By indignation roused, and stedfast ire.

NOR less Androgeus, while he scann'd the past,
In doubtful thought, withheld his eager bands
From bold attack, still anxious, as he moved,
To mark his messenger's return. Hence, plunged
Amid the ranks, he shunn'd the Trojan Chief,

Nor ruled as wont, with strenuous hand, the field.
FAR on the camp's remotest bound, he spied
At last, a troop advancing through the files
That open'd as it pass'd; and in the midst,
Near as they came, beheld the sire, inclosed
By circling guards, who to his own convey'd
Their charge uninjured, and retired.—He saw,
And singling from his peers Orontes, gave
To him the legions, while himself advanced,
To learn what face the stranger host display'd.
ARRIVED, the herald soon rehearsed his tale,
Th' indignant monarch's ire, the cheek that glow'd
With honest pride, the scorn from every eye
That flash'd askance in lightning: last, he show'd
The sword that graced a youthful warriour's hand,
Who fell in combat, by Gerontes borne
In triumph from the field.—Androgeus heard
Amazed, and with great Brutus wish'd to hold,
While war suspended stood, apart, and free,
Discourse, to clear a dark mysterious scene.
HENCE, lowering as he strode, the fatal spear,
And singling out th' imperial Chief, from those
That ruled the van of fight; he bent his course
Onward, to meet the monarch, and forbade
His host to combat more. The monarch mark'd,
Well-pleased, th' intent, and ceasing from his work,
Divined of prosperous change, and stopt the war.

While here the settling nations breathed, from toil
Released, far other deeds along the right,
Where all was tumult, graced Locrinus' band.
As when a famish'd lion, coop'd within
A narrow space, and struggling with the chain
That locks him fast, while in his sight, the flock
Range o'er the plain uninjured; raging round,
What time he breaks the circling engine, roars,
And shakes his ragged front, and on his prey
Bounds, growling horrid joy: Gerontes, thus
Abroad now rushing, scatter'd in his ire
The Trojan force. Stern Camber, where he moved,
And great Megistheus, to the giant's arm
Opposed alone a barrier. Yet he burst
That mighty bulwark oft, and rear'd on high
His mace, or sweeping sidelong, hew'd his way.
Thus while he raged, a shout resounding long
Roll'd onward from the left; the giant turn'd,
And lo! Locrinus, in the pride of might,
Before his bands triumphant, rush'd along!
Not less terrific in Gerontes' eye,
Than ocean's angry God, by night beheld
Dim on the foaming billow, with his arm
Aloft, and shaking through the lurid air,
His forked trident, as in wrath!—Above
His head, Azzazel held the trump of war;
And swell'd, ere yet the hero met his foes;

A blast, in thunder pealing to the main!
THOUGH near the giant King, th' apostate stood
In his own form unseen, for now his thought
Presaged some dire event, yet terrour struck
His horrid heart; he turn'd askance his eye,
And slow-receding, sought his dire compeers.
QUEEN of the boundless main, whose spirit fires
This heart, exulting, while it scans the past,
To mark the fathers of the British line,
The sons of fame, triumphant! Grant the mind,
Keen as it darts a penetrating glance
Along the void immense, through yonder cloud,
To trace the glories of the first of men!
LOCRINUS' sword, great sovereign, met thy ken,
Whirl'd in an orb of fire: in Berion's breast
Thou saw'st the weapon quivering, and the form,
A giant corse, extended on the soil,
Even at Gerontes' feet: thine eye beheld
The hero's flaming mail, his piercing glance,
By instant deeds pursued: Thou saw'st affright
In each pale face, that wither'd at his frown,
An host recoiling where he trode;—thine arm
Upheld the band around him, and before
The troop advancing, spread the blazing shield!
MEANWHILE, Romerus, whose great soul survey'd,
With indignation fired, the treacherous deed
That roused the fiends of slaughter, stood aloof

From fight, employing in defence alone
His native prowess: Camber oft essay'd
To meet his force in combat; but the spear
Still err'd, nor, mighty as he was, the Chief
Yet dared in closer fight to tempt its power.

THUS stood the war, when nearer now approach'd
The Man Divine, encircled with a troop,
That, new to sight, behind the hero came;
With cleaving axes arm'd, and poniards keen,
That glitter'd in their march. He in their front
Advancing, call'd Gerontes, and before
The trembling savage, stretch'd a God-like foe,
Great Lycophron, in dust. High o'er the corse
He stood, dispersing with his spear, the crew.

AND now the moment, on its flitting wing
That bore Gerontes' fate, advanced to close
The long-contested battle, and decide
Of final victory; a moment, mark'd,
Of those on *Destiny's* revolving wheel,
That from the womb of spreading night emerge,
By deeper characters; for as the Prince
Beheld the scattering herd, by fate's decree
He singled Cambus out, whose treacherous heart
Impell'd, to deeds of death, a ruthless hand.

SURE, as the winged arrow from the bow
At random shot, by energy divine,
That reach'd a monarch's life,* through Cambus' arm

* 2 Chronicles xix. 33.

That heav'd from earth a solid mass, and swung
On air the rock, the ready javelin held
Its course. Locrinus gave it wing. Affright
Appall'd the murderer; reeling, o'er the field
He fell. The hero downward turn'd the sword,
In act to strike; and bending, raised his hand
To give the weapon force; when Cambus stay'd
With suppliant voice, the meditated blow;
And thus in broken words assail'd his ear:

'SPARE, mighty Chief, thy victim!—Spare a life
'Of import to thine host.—A secret act
'I know, and if thou stay'st that lifted lance,
'May yet reveal; of power to turn the scale
'Of doubtful fight, and make the field thine own.

'WHAT secret, wretch? (the Prince with scorn replied,
Still with the sword suspended.)—I pursue
'No hidden path to conquest. Die, then die!'

HE said; and instant in the murderer's breast
Had sheathed the weapon, when Megistheus caught
His arm descending.—'Hold, (the Chief exclaim'd)
'His words conceal mysterious truth, to thee
'Unknown.—I see, methinks, their end.—Consign
'To me the captive, and pursue thy way.'

THUS he: Locrinus turn'd, and with a look
Announcing fate, roll'd on the tide of war.

MEANWHILE, the giant monarch mark'd the fall
Of Cambus, inly pleased, while yet he judged

The savage stretch'd in death. But when he saw,
That rising unrestrain'd, he held his course
A captive, not a victim, with the band
That bore him willing to Androgeus' eye,
The dire presage of ruin struck his thought:
He saw that monarch, and his Albian host,
Not lost alone, but kindled into rage,
By perfidy detected, and combined,
If truth should reach him, with the hostile powers.
HIM, thus impending on the giddy verge
Of instant fate, the guardian Queen beheld,
Throned on a cloud; and near, th' infernal King,
From deeds abstaining yet, but looking ire,
And dark suspicion. By his secret breath
Inspired, she saw where Vortiger prepared
To stop Megistheus' course, a chosen few;
She saw Gerontes madding, yet restrain'd
From fight, and fate suspended by the arts
Of hell's superiour Lord.—She turn'd her eye
To heaven, and on th' ethereal void, beheld
A flaming minister descend. She knew
Ithuriel, as he stopt.—'Th' Eternal wills,
'That in yon field you meet th' infernal King,
'And drive him hence. To him incensed, oppose
'That shield, nor dread th' event; God, with command
'Gives power to execute.—The task be mine,
'To guide Megistheus onward, with his prize.'

He spoke, and to the guardian Queen consign'd
A shield, deep-tinctured with celestial dies,
And with its rays effulgent. Half aside
She turn'd the splendent orb, and from her place
Descending instant, met th' apostate's sight.
As near the Memphian domes, in ruin heap'd
Around, the traveller at twilight sees,
Awe-struck, the towering Pyramid ascend,
Great in the majesty of age; his sides
Breached by trenching thunder, or by time
Defaced, or scathed by violating hands;
Seen through the gloomy void, he seems prepared
To meet, unshaken on his base, the sweep
Of rushing elements, and cast aside
The demons maddening on their fiery wing:
Thus stood the fiend; thus, as he mark'd the spirit
Divine, the flaming sword around her waved:
With steady pace advancing; stay'd secure.
Short parle ensued.—'Me meets thy madness, (thus
He spoke in hostile guise:)—Me wouldst thou brave
'Imperious?—Hence, ere yet this arm chastise
'Thy bold temerity!'—He ceased, and thus
The deep's high sovereign with unalter'd mien.
'That here I meet thee, Satan, with an hand
'Of power to match thy force, and brow that bears
'Defiance, know, proud angel, is the gift
'Of power omnipotent.—Unhappy!—leave

'Thy charge, even now.—I turn not, but with pain,
'What mocks thy rage, and sends thee hence abrupt,
'And howling to thy shades.'—While speaking thus,
Still, from th' apostate's sight she kept the shield
Conceal'd, and bending, held the flaming sword
Portended as her guard. Th' infernal heard,
Indignant, not dismay'd. He raised an arm,
That wields the warring elements, aloft;
To sweep, as on a whirlwind's wing, the power
From earth; when back recoiling, ere it fell,
Full in his front, she placed the sun-like orb
That blazed of heaven!—A sight inured to mark
Alone the gleaming of the sulphurous lake,
Bore not the flood of day, ah! with what joy
Once felt!—A sigh the fall'n Archangel heaved
From his swoln heart, a sudden pang, unknown
Before, an arrow wing'd by pale despair
In his black bosom quiver'd. Round he wheel'd,
And shrunk at once in darkness.

As he, who reeking with a father's blood,
Leap'd from th' incestuous bed, and rush'd along
Scourged by the yelling furies; while the ghost
Of murder'd Laius, or Jocasta, glared
Horrific in his path;—Gerontes thus,
What time his guardian fled, by desperate ire
Impell'd, to stop the Lycian with his prize,
Broke from the throng unheedful; but beheld

Aghast Locrinus in his mid career.

HIGH on th' aerial void, the solar orb
In his bright zenith shone: the guardian Queen,
Again, reclining on a mantling cloud
Skirted with fluid gold, o'erlook'd the field.

BEHIND her ranged, th' inferiour spirits form'd
An arch, with wings, expanded, as they waved
Incumbent, floating on th' etherial void;
As heaven's resplendent bow, whose tints dissolve
In liquid air. High, on th' empyrean height
They eyed, in still suspense, th' unfolding scene.

BUT stunn'd, not yielding, hell's imperial Lord
Still fiercely opposite, essay'd to shield
The giant monarch from th' avenger. Hence
He sought, concealing in a borrow'd form,
His shape, Romerus.—'Go, thy King demands
'Thine arm, in instant peril. Save his life;
'And know, a greater than thy boasted God
'Of ocean gives thee aid.'—He spoke with stern
Regard, and vanish'd in the tempest's roar.

MEANWHILE, the towering champions now prepared
For fight. Gerontes seem'd a match for Gods;
Around him swinging with a mighty hand
A mace, of power to scatter in its sweep
An host. Locrinus, full in sight opposed,
Moved like the minister of fate. His eye
Shot death. The living weapon, in his hand

Seem'd, with his spirit, as th' electric wheel,
With fire instinct. He dash'd aside the mace,
And rush'd impetuous on. Th' Arch-fiend involved
His charge in sudden darkness, but the foe
Plunged in its depth. Imperial Queen, thine eye
Look'd through th' investing cloud! Thou saw'st the rage
Of toiling combatants, alternate fix'd
In strong embrace; alternate, as a rock
Rent by some earthquake from its inmost base,
Asunder parting!—Thou beheld'st, appall'd,
An host, that heard slow-rolling from the shade,
The roar that *spoke of* madness, the deep groan
Of agonizing pain, the distant din
As of a shaken tower, that nods his head,
Ere yet he sinks in ruin!—Goddess, thou
Heard'st the whole tumbling mass at last descend
As in a peal of thunder, and the low
And hollow clang of death! Thine arm dispell'd
The night;—when lo! th' astonish'd hosts beheld
Gerontes stretch'd on earth!—Supine he lay,
And gnash'd in death his bloody mace, and heaved
His eye-balls, darken'd by the film that veil'd
Their setting orbs! Locrinus stood confess'd,
Wrenching the gore-stain'd weapon, from the throat
It pierced. Romerus, as he saw, recoil'd:
An howl announcing terrour and amaze
Burst from the giant tribe, a sound that reach'd

Their offspring starting in the distant vale!

MEANTIME, the hero, from th' attendant throng
Around him, sought a messenger approved.
'Fly to the left, (he cried) and bear the news
'Of fall'n Gerontès, to the monarch's ear.
'Bid him with speed approach, but send in haste
'Young Alban, and Eugenius, skill'd to trace
'The path, that to the giant's fortress winds,
'Along the woodland.'—While he spoke, he call'd
His host, and waving in his hand the sword,
Even great Romerus, by the scene o'eraw'd,
Retired. Th' apostate screen'd him, as he moved
Backward with tardy steps; the forest's shade
Conceal'd his flying mates. Gerontes' corse,
Forsaken, lay before the vulgar dead
Exposed, and death-like silence reign'd around!

BRITANNIA.

—BOOK XX.—

THE ARGUMENT.

ANDROGEUS, although ascertained of the treachery of his former allies, by the declaration of CAMBUS; yet unwilling to act against them without necessity, obtains a promise from BRUTUS, of yielding to them a part of the Island, upon condition of retaining the remainder in his own possession; which is rejected by ROMERUS. SATAN, in order to make his last effort, in defeating the enterprise of BRUTUS, comes forth on his native element, as the Prince of the Power of the Air; and after having been opposed successfully by ITHURIEL, as the Leader of other celestial Beings, is finally expelled by the thunder of Omnipotence. The battle is renewed. The fortress of the Giants is taken, partly by a device of EUGENIUS, and partly by the valour of LOCRINUS. ROMERUS in the mean time, remains alone unconquered, with a small number of followers. Covered with many wounds, he leans on the trunk of a tree, that supports him from falling. LOCRINUS comes forward. The war ceases; and the Champions eye each other in silence. ROMERUS at last speaks. He forbids LOCRINUS to sully his glory, by taking a life already exhausted; and withdrawing from his support, while no arm is raised against him, sinks, in the general ruin of his kind, upon the field.

LED by the younger Chiefs, the Trojan host
Reach'd, ere involving darkness wrapt the scene
From sight, the woodland's farther bound, and eyed
The giants' last retreat; but on the field

Reposing, stay'd to mark the dewy ray
Of morn, disclosing in its range, the stream,
The fort's rude bulwarks, and the numbers, penn'd
Within an ample space; whose mingled wail,
And clamour, roll'd along the hollow void,
Assail'd, by night, the warriour's troubled ear.

ERE this, Androgeus, from his ancient mates,
Disjoin'd the Albians. Cambus, from his thought
Expell'd the doubt, that held his anxious mind
Sway'd by conflicting passions, and impell'd,
As hope or fear assumed alternate rule,
To various deeds: yet still his heart retain'd
Its native impulse. In Gerontes fall'n,
He saw the guilty, by the wrath Divine,
O'erturn'd. Romerus' inborn pride disdain'd,
He knew, perfidious acts; of all his kind
The best, the noblest: in th' inferiour tribe,
A savage race he mark'd, to reason blind,
Whom yet the feeling heart with pity view'd,
In each fell deed obsequious to command;
And driven by power propelling, as the wedge,
Before the hammer in a forceful hand.

THUS while he mused apart, great Brutus call'd
Th' inferiour leaders, now, with lighter hearts
Who scann'd the scene, to council. Pleasure danced
On each unbending front, and playful hope,
On features clad in smiles, wanton'd at ease

Uncheck'd.—In human life, alas! how near
The sunshine, and the storm! A little day
Is thine, frail man, in feeble light that dawns,
And sets in darkness; but what varying forms
Move on that narrow hemisphere, to mock
By turns the children of the passing hour,
Bustling in busy search, and whirl'd around,
The sport of passions, in each fierce extreme!
AROUND the Trojan monarch, thus elate,
The Chiefs assembled, where Androgeus graced,
With Albion's peers, the concourse: as he trode,
The throng disparting gave the stranger way,
And looking reverence, saw their guest, assume
A place distinguish'd at the sovereign's hand.
Great Segonax, Orontes, and the train
Of Albian Princes placed around:—the King
Thus raising high his pointing hand, began:
'PRINCES, and leaders of confederate friends,
'For such I judge our hosts, in league combined,
'With mighty Jove propitious, to avenge
'On yonder race, the violated laws
'Of truth;—ye see, how Heaven that guards the just,
'Marks fraud, when skulking in her nook abhorr'd,
'And drags her into light.—Yet, when we hear
'Calm reason's temperate dictates, in the hour
'Of peace, she pleads, that of the barbarous throng,
'Whose hands maintain'd the well-contested field,

'Not all are guilty; and the sounds of woe,
'From yon devoted bulwark, that assail
'Our ears, incline the yielding heart, to spare
'Foes not with pride insensate. Hence, to all,
'To thee, great leader, first, (while speaking thus
He eyed Androgeus) be the task consign'd
'To say, of various means, what most avails
'To stop the rage of slaughter; or should war
'Impend, to point the path, that best conveys
'To some unfinish'd opening, where our hosts
'May break with sudden onset on the foe,
'And end at once our labours.—What ye deem
'The best, th' assembly waits, prepared to hear.

He ceased.—Androgeus, with a look that mark'd
Compassion waked by memory, and the thought
Of future ills, with graceful act arose:
All on the Chieftain bent inquiring eyes,
Calm as the lake, when not a breath disturbs
The smooth expanse, and thus serene, replied:

'Lord of a mighty nation, tried in faith,
'As great in martial deeds, and ye who strive
'To raise your name by virtue, as by acts
'Of prowess in the field,—know, when I hear
'Your monarch, heedful, in the joyous hour
'Of conquest, to the sigh that pity prompts,
'And conscious Heaven approves; to Him, whose hand
'Hither with care convey'd you, and maintains,

'I bow in grateful homage! Unallied
'To those in guilty deeds, perhaps in mind,
'Though like in form and stature, to presage,
'Of what their pride may dictate in the hour
'Of rage, I boast not. Yet th' attempt is great,
'To raise the fallen, and triumph, as in war,
'By force, by mercy, in its close. 'Tis there
'The hand, but here the heart, that speaks its power.
'NOR judge, great leaders, though ye saw so late
'Yon army vanquish'd, and their tyrant slain,
'That now their spirit sinks. Their mightiest yet
'Remains, Romerus, in himself an host,
'A Chief advanced by nature, not by art;
'And with instinctive virtue great beyond
'What precept forms. The fraudful Vortiger
'Still lives, with counsel to direct their deeds;
'In estimation mighty, versed in guile,
'And, in th' extreme of peril, prompt to search
'Resources unexplored.—With these conjoin'd,
'Their wives, their offspring, whose complaining voice
'Thrills to the parents' heart, will brace their nerves
'With strength, collecting vigour from despair.
'HENCE, ere ye meet in fight, a desperate throng,
'Driv'n to their last retreat, 'tis meet, ye try
'By terms of offer'd empire, to subdue
'Their stubborn hearts: of this great region, yield
'A part to them, conceding to resign

'As yours the rest; be Albion's host declared
'Their friends, consenting; else determined foes,
'By just resentment roused, and heaven-inspired
'T' avenge an impious act.—This counsel, Chiefs,
'Should ye approve, an Albian waits to bear,
'By me empower'd, our message; should their pride
'Reject these gentler means;—ye injured sons
'Of Albion, long oppress'd, I stay not more
'Your hands from vengeance; give your rage its way!'

ALL, while Androgeus spoke, approving, heard;
But Segonax the most, and his compeers,
Impatient for revenge. Deep silence gave
Assent. The monarch, ere the warriours rose,
Graced, with deserved applause, his God-like son.
The Albian leader, singling for his work
An Herald, gave command, with speed to seek
The hostile towers, and to Romerus bear
His words; then in the silence of his tent,
Amid his mates, indulged in short repose.

MEANTIME, confusion, terrour, and despair,
Guests dire of aspect, and till now unknown,
Reign'd in the giants' last recess. What time
The stern Gerontes, and Locrinus, met
In fight,—loud rumour, verging from her wont
To swell, with added circumstance, a tale;
In shape a fugitive, yet green in age,
Eager, and babbling, as she ran, to reach

The fort; once, (fate assenting) of th' event
Gave just report: in bosoms, that denied
Belief, she raised impatience. Hence the throng
Of females, and the younger train, that fill'd
The rampart, heedful, eyed with anxious hearts
The interposing field. A cry they heard
Of deep dismay, and as they gazed, beheld
A straggling few at first, and now the whole
Collected numbers, all in flight. They heard
Soon of the fatal cause, and as the sand
Borne on the mounting billows, swept before
The throng, now rushing on, were whirl'd along.

NOT sooner in the fort they stood secure,
Than from the forest, in approach, they mark'd,
With arms effulgent in the solar rays,
The strangers' glittering host; and heard the shout
Of triumph, dying on the breath of eve,
In distant murmurs. To the mothers' knees
The children clung, or sought, behind their sires,
A shade from peril, on their faultering tongues,
And quivering lips discern'd. With night, the war
Surceased; but desperate rage inflamed the crew
Around Romerus met. Their sovereign slain,
And Gerion far removed, that Chief assumed
Command, by pride upheld, as they by ire,
And in the general slaughter bent to fall.

THUS while they sat, the messenger, who bore

Androgeus' words, approach'd. Romerus knew
The Herald, heard his message, calm'd the storm
That else had burst in thunder, and replied:
'HERALD, my words declare the general voice.
'I shared not of perfidious deeds; but scorn,
'By mean submission, to conciliate hearts,
'Else to our race averse.—We call this land
'Our own, and hold yon strangers as a tribe
'Who merit chastisement.—Avaunt!—But bear
'This as our answer.—With to-morrow's sun
'We mean to fight, to conquer, or to fall.'
HE said, and rising, from th' assembly, strode,
To bid the clamour of th' inferiour throng
Subside, and rouse the spirit of the tribes
To direful enterprise, that best beseem'd
Their state: his words in their fierce hearts awaked
Each fiery passion, while his purpose stood
Fix'd as inexorable fate,—to die.
BUT bent on other thoughts, th' infernal King,
Driven to his last resource, around him brought,
While darkness wrapt the humid sphere, a train
Of his own followers: Azrael came in haste,
With Moloch, Belial, and th' inferiour crew
Of demons, rising from the lake beneath,
To yield unforced obedience to the rule
Of their great sovereign. These th' apostate view'd,
And thus accosting, gave his stern command:

'Ye thrones of hell, a mighty work requires
'Your greatest effort.—Fly to every wind
'With speed, and gather, ere the morning sun
'Mount on yon sphere, the deepest shades of night,
'To veil his radiance.—Be the seeds of fire,
'Air, water, all collected, in their crude
'Consistence.—Go;—on yonder breaking cloud,
'I mark the glimmer of the dawn.'—He spoke,
And heard innumerable wings, abroad
That rush'd like dashing cataracts; intent
On their dire work, and joying in its end.

Now, wan through spreading umbrage, that o'ercast
His orb, the sun ascending from the main,
Tinged the pale orient; while he rose, the bird
Of darkness, flapping on the dusky air
Her wings, portentous of impending fate,
Hung o'er the destined domes, and wailing, sought
The silence of the waste. All heard alarm'd
The boding sign, but chief the female train,
And younger offspring stood aghast: alone,
Hope, when they eyed Romerus, that announced
Of some successful close, forbade despair.

Meanwhile, the enemy of God, who deem'd
To save the nation, till the fateful hour
Had pass'd, involved in triple night the sun;
Nor on the throng beneath, prepared to fight,
The gladdening beam descended.—In amaze

They stood, uncertain of th' Eternal's will.
THUS while th' apostate judged, nor Nature's Lord
Gave sign of rising wrath, and bent his eye
Eastward, to mark what might ensue; the clouds
Dispersed, and other than the solar blaze
O'erspread th' aerial void. To those beneath,
Some emanation from the orb of day,
Fraught with his purest radiance, seem'd to float
Along the empyrean; but the fiend
Mark'd, on th' effulgence, spreading, as it moved
Onward in majesty serene, the sons
Of heaven enthroned; and nearer as it came,
Beheld the light of panoply divine.
AS to the first Chaldean sage, the son
Of Belus, marking on th' expanse of air,
The signs celestial, and the various spheres
Of planetary orbs; if, while he scann'd
The worlds, around some central orb revolved
In regulated mode, while yet his sight
Dwelt on the forms, had then, with streaming hair
A comet on the blue horizon flamed,
Excentric in its course; and as it sought
Each planet's range, confounding all his schemes
At once; th' amaze, but not the dread, his soul
Had felt while wondering, struck th' infernal King.
BUT soon resolved in thought, the PRINCE of AIR
Rose on his regal element; his wings

Amid the dark expanded, as a fleet
With pennants flying, and extended sails,
Seen through surrounding mists, that seems to hold,
The deep invested in its range; appear'd
Through night's dark shade, collecting as they waved
The winds; the flaming meteor, that portends
The fate of nations, as he roll'd his eyes,
Flash'd o'er the void, and from his hands, he flung
Abroad the tempest, madding, in his van!

THUS while the fiend came on, th' angelic bands,
With power imparted from on high, to still
The turbid elements, advanced: around,
Light from their forms refulgent, and their wings
Tinged with ethereal dies, spontaneous flow'd,
Diffusing temperate warmth, and on the calm
Of nature, gliding o'er the blue serene.

AS when the margin of the winding stream,
Scorch'd by the summer drought, that half-exhaled
The wandering current, feels refreshing showers;
The grass, gay-gleaming with the spangling drops,
Resumes its lucid green; the flowers, that spread
Their many-colour'd vesture on the vale,
Now lift their heads, rejoicing in the ray
That sloping gilds their quivering leaves: the scene
Thus bright, behind the band celestial, glow'd.

FULL in the dazzling front, Ithuriel led
The splendent host, and with his hand repell'd

The tempest in his flight; the fiends conceal'd
In its dark bosom, as he came, recoil'd
Back on their King indignant, and involved
In triple night. In hostile guise they met:
When thus Ithuriel, with contracted brow,
Advanced before th' ethereal race, began:

'Oh ever bent on evil, that returns
'On thy devoted head, with just reward
'Of added chastisement! Declare, what cause
'Prompts thee to trouble, in thy wrath, the rest
'Of slumbering elements, and hither bring
'These magazines of dark embodied air,
'To work thy purposes? Or while thou may'st
'Retire in silence, nor present a front
'Already scathed, and blasted, to the hand
'Of him whose thunder shakes the gulph of hell.'

Thus he, when through the night that wrapt him round,
Was heard the great Arch-Angel.—'Hence, or dread
'My wrath: with thee, proud Angel, and thy train
'Of servile worshippers, I hold not parle.'

He said, and turning, in a voice that shook
The pendent orbs of heaven, all in their round
Recoiling, sounds uncaught by mortal ear,
Call'd on his followers, all intent to spread
In clouds, the rage of elemental war.

Now from his black abode, the roaring storm
Came forth, and on his wings, had borne amain

Opposing spheres, disturbing on her seat
Primœval nature; but the Power that framed,
Preserved his work, fix'd as th' eternal base
Of truth. In vain, the fiend in whirlwinds burst
Now on th' angelic phalanx, that advanced
Still onward, with impenetrable shields
That bore his utmost force; anon, in vain,
Essay'd to heave the steady cliff, or bear
Th' incumbent mountain on his arm: the hills
Maintain'd their place unshaken, while their tall
And shagged offspring, by the *soul within*
Inform'd, stood rooted in the parent soil;
And bent their naked tops, that rose in air.

As when an ebbing flood, by winds impell'd
On rocks projecting o'er the main, assails
With roar unceasing, but subsiding power,
The mass; a secret, but resistless hand,
Repels the turbid element, impair'd
In each succeeding effort, and withdrawn
From cliffs, the barriers of surrounding lands,
On their broad base secure. Th' apostate, thus
Receding, though with rage, and scorn inflamed,
Now on the empyrean, and anon
On earth, he met a charging host, that rose
By turns, by turns descended, yet retired.
Beneath, he saw conflicting hosts, engaged
In desperate fight; and as he moved, the cry

Of mothers, infants, wailing, met his ear.
He heard the shout of triumph from the foe,
And view'd them conquering, while he strove to wrap
The sphere in night, beneath the blaze of day.
He saw Locrinus, loosening, ere he tore
From earth the rooted stakes, the vain defence
Of those his arm protected; and when now
He reach'd the fosse, and stood in act to leap,
And pierce the giants' last retreat, the scene
Was lost; a power superiour from his view
Withheld th' event. Even to the western main
The train pursued him, while the Highest roll'd
Long peals of doubling thunder on his head,
O'erawing thus a spirit, whose dire hand,
Else arm'd with flames, had in a fiery shower
Of arrows streaming sulphur, held the cope
Of heaven dissolving in a blaze; nor aught
But Power Omnipotent had quell'd his ire.

Meanwhile, unconscious of the deeds that show'd
Superiour minds engaged, the Trojan host,
Beneath their leaders, join'd with Albion's sons,
Advanced to fight. Alone Androgeus stood
Apart, with peaceful purpose. Memory brought
To sight the deeds of ancient days, the ties
Of kindred, friends, by mutual acts endear'd,
Of grateful sympathy: hence, bent to save
From harm his brethren, while he gave his bands

Their course, his guiltless hand abstain'd from war.
But bent on other acts, great Brutus' host
Approach'd: they deem'd behind their mounds to meet
The giant tribes; and half-inclosing round
The rampart, save where on the farther side
The river laved the fortress, had assail'd
The throng within; but while they march'd, the foe
Rush'd out, Romerus in their front! A few
Closed in their rear, with rooted stakes, the chasm
That gave them space: the host strode on. Prepared
They seem'd for desperate deeds, while each in sight
Brandish'd a mace before him, with an arm
Of force to break a phalanx; and upheld
Unshapen fragments, raised aloft, to crush
Beneath their weight, impell'd with matchless sway,
Opposing shields.—Nor yet their number seem'd,
Though now reduced by slaughter, and the loss
Of people once allied, such as might raise
The scorn of mighty nations, leagued in war.
On either wing, the younger tribes appear'd
In warlike guise, here, cased in shining arms
Glean'd from the field; there, wielding, as their sires,
Whate'er the soil, or gather'd stores supplied.
A female band, beneath Argantia form'd,
With quivers stored, and roughen'd with the spoils
Of woodland foes, claim'd with impatient hearts
The fight; while far behind, was heard the voice

Of Nature, quivering in the mother's wail,
Or swelling in acclaim, or uttering threats,
Or shrieking wild with anguish and despair,
As fate decreed, or fortune changed the scene!
The Dardan troops, as Brutus gave command,
Fell back; and slow-retiring, drew the foes
That pour'd impetuous onward, to a plain
Beyond the fort, whence interposing files
Forbade return. Locrinus, with his friends,
Eugenius, Alban, and Adrastus, girt
With Lyrnessean bands, assail'd the guards
Within the fortress pent, their hope's last bound.
Deep in their hold intrench'd, a desperate throng,
All bent on death, and breathing, but to sate
Revenge, with force united, strove to crush,
As waves that closing whelm an hapless crew,
Their foes. Locrinus hence, so late beheld
With terrour and amaze, appall'd not now,
As wont, their savage hearts. On his broad shield,
While with his followers, and his new allies,
He pierced their thickest battle, their dire hands
Discharged unwieldy fragments, but by fate
Repell'd. The hero heaping, as he moved,
The field with dead, still onward held his course;
While glittering axes here, and there, the spears
Of charging cohorts, as a forest rose
Behind. The shrieks of females, as he strode,

All with dishevell'd locks, and lifted hands,
Who from th' interiour fence beheld his rout,
Announced his near approach, and told his power.
But on the plain, inclosed by marshall'd troops,
That held his lessening numbers, in their void
Already half-embraced, Romerus toil'd
In desperate fight; nor found a moment's pause,
From scene to scene incessant as he flew,
Alarm'd by cries that spoke increasing dread,
And fate's impending sword.—Great Brutus, here,
Though prompt to pardon, yet incensed, led on
A close cemented body. Camber near,
And stern Megistheus, towering in the van
Of hosts advanced, that swept opposing force
Before them headlong, as a torrent bears
Rocks, downward tumbling to the gulph. The Chief
Of Athens, while he led his legion on,
Breathed his own spirit, in each bounding heart
With ardour throbbing, when the prize so near
Stood full exposed; while Segonax approach'd,
With Albion shouting in his train. All strove
With emulative deeds to win the field.
As when the mighty buffalo, secure
In wastes, the haunt of lions, that extend
Beyond the rude Batavians' wide domain,
To Afric's inland regions; in the depth
Of spreading umbrage, hears the voice of Man,

Dire tyrant, breaking on his deep repose;
Slow, from the thicket where he slept at ease,
He rears his forked head, by nature arm'd
For fight, and moving from the shade, appears,
Life-quelling shape! while yet he glares around,
When balls, and darts, and goring pikes assail
At once his frame, and from wide wounds, he feels
The blood in streams descending; when he lifts
His front, and bellowing to the desart, toils
Amid his foes:—his bulk, his sinewy form,
His strength, his ire, indignant of repulse,
Nor but by death to be subdued, were thine,
Great leader!—With resistless hand, while here
He swept the foes before him; there, a band
On some half-guarded barrier, burst amain
With shouts. He turn'd: but, as the corn that falls
Before the reaper's hand, beheld his mates
Around him dropping, unrevenged. An oak
He seem'd, that shaken to his base, with leaves
The sport of winds, and ragged branches, stands
The pride of all the forest; while his head,
Robb'd of its kingly honours, and exposed
To meet the roaring tempest, mock'd its rage.

While thus the battle stood, Eugenius, skill'd
To trace each winding path, that to the fort
Convey'd; and of its weakness, as its strength,
Observant, mark'd the farther side, whose edge

The river laved ; of other rampart void.
Eyeing the shallow stream, his thought conceived
A scheme of final import ; great, nor hard
To be atchieved. He saw without a guard
That unprotected part, while all within
Flock'd to the mound, where now Locrinus shook
The stakes deep-rooted in the soil, that barr'd
His entrance. Singling Alban from the throng,
And Segonax, still circled with a train
Of Albion's bravest sons :—'Hither, (he cried)
'Leaders, approach, and mark what objects stand
'In sight !—Alone that shallow current bars
'Our path to yonder domes, the last resort
'Of foes ; one effort crowns the glorious day.
'Collect a power in haste, and let us dare
'A mighty deed. Great Brutus, when inform'd
'Of our bold act, will grace it with applause.'
He said. A ready band was form'd with speed.
They caught the winged moment, and resolved,
Yet silent, sought, with one consent, the stream.
But urged by hope, to reach the lofty domes
Already near, Locrinus held his way
Onward, with steady course ; the female train,
Now shrieking as they gazed, and to their pale
And frighted offspring pointing, while they turn'd
Their heads, and raised their trembling hands, the spear
That laid Gerontes low : Death on the point

Appear'd suspended, as it waved around
Yet lingering in his hand; the throng behind
Seem'd, on a prize in instant view, prepared
To seize; their shouts, and gleaming shields at hand.

THROUGH forms with native power, but not with (arms,
Or judging sense endow'd, Locrinus clear'd
A path; and eyeing now the fosse, inclosed
By piles deep-sunk in earth, with sharpen'd points,
A strong, yet rugged fence, with skill contrived,
And fix'd by mighty hands; he seized a stake,
Collecting all his vigour, and essay'd
By force to wrench it from th' investing soil.
Around him labouring thus, his Druid troop,
And Dardans form'd a guard; and on the bank
Behind, a desperate, and promiscuous tribe,
Brandish'd their shapeless truncheons in his sight;
Or stood, with ponderous and unformed rocks,
To whelm him instant; while their rolling eyes
Alternate spoke affright, amaze, despair.

STILL toiling at a work, that seem'd ordain'd
For power divine, at last the hero freed
The stake, then cast it sidelong on the ground:
And lo! a chasm, soon by his following host
Enlarged, gave entrance to the throng!—The fosse,
Broad, deep, and guarded on the farther side,
Now singly stopt their course. Athwart the space,
They cast the pales continuous, as a bridge

In haste design'd.—And now Locrinus waved
His hand aloft, and loud-exhorting call'd,
To one last effort, his exulting bands.
'YE hearts that pant for conquest, and for fame,
'Now is the hour when glory calls you forth!
'Approach; her path lies open.'—While he said,
Broad shields, refulgent in the flaming noon,
All on the fortress opening, in a form
Of mighty depth, in awful silence moved,
Splendent, and terrible!—Locrinus strode
Before, a God in aspect, sent by Jove
To desolate the nations!—On he came,
While deep suspense, a moment, still'd the scene.
THUS stood the fight, when from the farther side
A shout was heard, in long and doubling peals,
Announcing change. All scann'd with eager eyes
The fort; when ensigns, and long files, appear'd
Emerging through the shade. Again they look'd,
When lo, the banners waving on the wind,
And troops advancing, show'd the work atchieved!
These, seen approaching on the space behind,
Held, in their range, the barbarous tribe inclosed
Around, and hopeless of Romerus' aid.
NOT wilder uproar o'er the Lybian waste
Prevails, when pillar'd whirlwinds sweep the sands
Self-moved, and in their eddying whirl, involve
The scatter'd caravan; than through the crew
Now storm'd, that reeling to and fro, with rage

Alone inform'd, defenceless, flying, bent
With hearts unyielding in assault to gall
The foes, and sink, ere listen to the voice
Of smooth conceding mercy, offering peace
Alike to all the race.—Locrinus eyed
The scene, and turning, thus bespoke unmoved,
His nearest mate, fierce Polybus, prepared
For each event, submission, conquest, war.
'Lo! there the remnant of a mighty race
'Subdued!—On yonder field, I go to meet
'Their greatest.—Hither, but in vain, he bends
'His course, encountering with a few compeers
'An host in fight. Thou, as occasion serves,
'Direct the work, but to the weak extend
'Thine arm in peace, and grant the suppliant's pray'r.'
He said,—and rush'd terrific o'er the plain.
Meanwhile, Romerus, in his last of days,
Girt with ferocious mates, upheld the war
With force subsiding, but a soul that braved,
And met th'' approaching peril.—From his place,
He saw the fort assail'd, and through the ranks,
Whole hosts recoiling where he turn'd, had plough'd
A path to reach it;—but the monarch barr'd,
With his broad shield, his course; though pity touch'd
His heart, relenting, while he mark'd a foe
So great, besieged, and at his latest hour,
Even when in fate's ascending hand, the sword
Spoke her dire menace; with erected eye

Yet standing unsubdued. The soldier's breast
Then felt the pang of mild humanity,
That thrill'd in every nerve. A stealing tear
Roll'd o'er his cheek unbidden; when he paused,
And claim'd, with gentle words, Romerus' ear:

'YIELD, mighty leader, (thus the monarch said)
'Nor waste thy prowess, in a desperate cause
'Already lost. In this surrounding host,
'Keen as thou seest for fight, and flush'd with hope
'Of final victory, by thy great arm
'Alone withheld, that o'er the field has spread
'Yon heaps of slain, no warriour meets thine eye,
'Whose bosom pants not with desire to save
'Thy life, and prizes virtue in a foe.'

THUS he.—Romerus, raising as he turn'd
His hand, from combat ceased, and thus replied:

'SEEST thou the mighty dead that strew the plain,
'Friends of my youthful days, my lost compeers?
'Hear'st thou the groans of mothers, children, fall'n
'In undistinguish'd carnage, where the sword
'Smites in his kindreds' hearts, this ebbing life,
'Already half-expell'd; and deem'st thou, Prince,
'That I, unhappy, will survive, to stand
'A solitary mark, a wanderer, doom'd
'To tread the wilderness alone, and breathe
'By thy permission?—No.—Even now the friends
'I lost, around me hover in mid air,
'And call me hence!—Away!—this spirit waits

'In death and ruin to ascend!'—He said,
And swung his mace, but with an arm impair'd,
And drain'd of ancient force.—The Trojan Chief
Receding, shunn'd the stroke, nor raised his spear.
As when a lion, with the hunter's shafts
That gore his sides, flies raging o'er the waste,
And eyes his mangled mate, and in his ire
Wild-rushing, while he bleeds, before him drives
The tribes that shun the desert's gloomy King,
And dread his last dire efforts: thus the throng
Around the giant, gave him scope to wield
His mace, dispersing when they mark'd the blood
That o'er his limbs descended, and the pangs
That wrung his mighty heart.
STILL near Romerus stood a ruthless few,
The gleanings of a falling race, resolved
To share their leader's fate. Of these, the first,
The subtle Vortiger, behind his shield
Yet moved secure. Avail'd not more his arts
Essay'd so long, from instant fate, to save
The friends his counsel chear'd in happier days.
Rage gave him courage now, and strung his arm
With force, while shielded by his great compeer.
Now parch'd with thirst, Romerus stoop'd to taste
The cool refreshment of a limpid rill,
That murmur'd at his feet.—Thy piercing eye,
Bold Camber, mark'd the moment, and thine hand
At Vortiger discharged a javelin, wing'd

With death. In act while yet he stood to guard
The mightier Chief, the fateful weapon rent
The furs that clad his towering form, and reach'd
The fount of life. A groan the giant heaved,
And backward tumbling in Romerus' path,
Lay prone; nor other accent reach'd his ear!
'Twas past:—the leader gave the combat o'er.
Amid the plain, a solitary oak
With aged arms extended, seem'd to call
The panting traveller to its shade. The Chief
Approach'd, and leaning on the trunk, survey'd
The field with stern regard, and breathed from toil.
As stands a column of thy mould'ring piles,
Tadmor, or great Persepolis, sublime
In ruin'd grandeur, once the pillar'd height
On whose broad base a regal mansion tower'd
By sculpture blazon'd, and with burnish'd gold
Mating the sun's effulgence; now inclined
O'er the rude fragments of surrounding domes,
Fall'n from their place, and by some feeble prop
Upheld, and tottering in the blast;—such now
Appear'd the great Romerus, from his height
Declined, yet looking awe; while on a race,
Earth's meaner offspring, his imperial eye
Sunk down.—The voice of thousands, while he stood,
Announced Locrinus. Through the parting ranks
With whirlwind speed, the hero rush'd amain
In blazing arms, and in a voice, that shook

The distant vale re-echoing to the sound,
Call'd forth Romerus!—As he spoke, he mark'd
The foe. He scann'd him o'er; and with his spear
High raised, advanced to combat.—All was still
Around. The hero stood amazed. The war
Was ceased. His God-like rival seem'd prepared
To meet his arm; but when at hand beheld,
His blood-stain'd locks, and chest that slowly heaved
As with subsiding life,—his hand, that held
The mace, from action now dismiss'd; the few
Beside him, fierce, and arrogant no more,
With heads declining, and dejected eyes,
Bent, as it seem'd, to share th' impending fate
Of their great Chief:—the silence of the scene,
All held Locrinus fix'd.—Around he waved
The messenger of fate, as if to rouse
The leader's latent spirit, and provoke
To just defence;—when in a voice, that spoke
Of his last hour, Romerus thus began:

'Thou, Chief, by me beyond thy mates revered,
'In fight invincible, forbear to lift
'A spear, that meets in honourable war
'The great in arms, to quench the last remain
'Of ebbing life.—Even now, I see thine arm
'In many a fight triumphant!—Gods! what forms
'Glide dim around me, here in horrent arms
'That stride, or rush impetuous on their steeds
'To war!—I hear the clashing shields!—'Tis fled!

'And lo! what nation rising through the shade,
'O'erspreads the boundless region?—Whither flies
'The fading wilderness?—Ah! what new scenes
'Ascend!—Art thou, imperial Neptune, chain'd
'By yonder shapes, that hold the subject main
'Enthrall'd, and speak in thunder?—But 'tis o'er!
'O! linger on your clouds, ye airy shades
'That beckon me away!—Romerus comes!'

He said. The mace fell hollow from his hand.
Prone dropt Locrinus' arm.—The hero turn'd
His face.—The voice of Nature whisper'd soft
In every warriour's bosom,—"Ye are MEN!"

And now, Romerus, from the trunk that bore
His weight, receding, stagger'd on the field;
The vital fluid, streaming in his path,
From wounds that bled afresh. His broad breast heaved
With the last breath. He turn'd his languid eyes
O'er his pale mates, and look'd a long farewell.
They pass'd, they shut in darkness!—Down he fell,
Amid the ruin of his kind, and sunk
In death, without a groan:—the mighty form,
No more the mansion of a noble mind,
On earth low laid, to mix with kindred clay.

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ERRATA.

Page 17. Note, read 15.

P. 28. N. for 4, 5, read 2, 3.

P. 30. N. for 33. r. 23. ibid. for 22, 23. r. 15, 16.

P. 31. l. 7. dele *them.*

P. 50. l. 4. for *they have* r. *he has*, ibid. r. *his.*

P. 57. l. 16. for *wide* r. *wild.*

P. 299. l. 19. for *meditating* r. *mediating.*

P. 333. l. 27. [illegible]

P. 343. Arg. for *falls asleep* r. *awakes.*

P. 371. l. 13. for *fell* r. *fell.*

P. 452. dele *at last.*

P. 459. for *post* r. *port.*

P. 460. l. 10. dele *in war.*

P. 470. l. 16. for *new* r. *now.*

P. 471. l. 4. for *power* r. *prowess.*

P. 505. l. 4. for *courts* r. *counts.*

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